

PENNSYLVANIA PYS 2022-2023 (MOD)

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## I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

This is a combined plan

#### COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

### B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pennsylvania is opting not to include an introduction or executive summary

## II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

### A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

#### 1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's economic future depends upon the development of a strong, skilled workforce able to compete in today's global economy. Analyzing current labor market information and understanding the obstacles confronting the workforce are essential steps the state must utilize to inform and develop policies, strategies, and goals to remain economically competitive.

Pennsylvania has a diversified economy with numerous competitive industry clusters and strives to develop a skilled workforce that aligns worker career goals to employer needs, all while providing targeted services to those with barriers to employment. The state is an ideal location for families and businesses given its mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas, its geographic proximity to nearly one-half of the nation's population, and strong job markets. The Commonwealth's capacity to provide an educated workforce is evidenced by approximately 350 postsecondary educational institutions which collectively enrolled more than 688,000 students in Fall 2020. While these characteristics of the state's labor market contribute to its solid economic foundation, they also create an opportunity to develop an increasingly skilled workforce to meet the demands of employers, the career goals of workers, and the needs of our evolving economy.

Public and private reactions to the onset of the pandemic in early 2020 led to both short-term and long-term changes. Mitigation efforts resulted in business closures and a surge of unemployment, illustrated with a record-setting 1,275,108 continued claims filed in Pennsylvania during the week ending on May 2, 2020. By May, output and employment started to rebound but were still well below pre-pandemic levels at year's end. New labor needs and trends emerged in certain industries, even amidst continued high volumes of unemployment. Necessary employer adjustments, such as teleworking, will probably continue going forward and have the potential to affect markets with many wide-reaching consequences and opportunities in the long term. The labor market has been and will continue to be challenged to create and maintain jobs with high and growing real wage rates in this new environment.

The availability and analysis of labor market information and trends will remain essential to the creation of effective workforce and economic development strategies and policies. While the data available at this time does not yet fully capture the impact of the ongoing pandemic and recent recession, the state can still utilize information about the population, labor force, industry mix, and employment outlook to enhance its existing sector strategies and ensure they align with the current and evolving labor market demands. . This approach will support the Governor's goal of building the strongest workforce in the nation.

*(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.*

To remain economically competitive, Pennsylvania must identify and meet the diverse workforce needs of existing industries and occupations. Understanding the differences in the Commonwealth's urban (like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh), suburban (like South Central PA, Lehigh Valley, and Erie), and rural (like Northern PA and the Appalachian region) labor markets is also critical in developing workforce and economic strategies.

Pennsylvania's seasonally adjusted total nonfarm jobs stood at 5,602,400 in December 2020, down 480,500 (-7.9 percent) from December 2019. During the same timeframe, U.S. nonfarm jobs decreased 9.4 million jobs (-6.2 percent) to 142.5 million. Recent job trends in the state are more optimistic. Since the most recent jobs low in April 2020 (4,962,900), PA jobs are up 639,500 (12.9 percent).

The chart below compares recent nonfarm jobs data with similar data prior to the Great Recession, which lasted from December 2007 through June 2009. Since December 2007, Pennsylvania lost 209,000 jobs (-3.6 percent), while the U.S. gained 4.1 million jobs (3.0 percent). While the job recovery and expansion from the Great Recession in the state, as well as the nation, occurred primarily in private sector jobs, the loss of jobs in 2020 due to the pandemic were more acutely felt in the private sector. Private sector jobs in the state decreased by 443,700 (-8.3 percent) in 2020, putting them below the state's December 2007 level, while in the nation, despite a 6.3 percent decline, remained above its pre-recession level.

	PA Jobs in Dec. 2020	PA Volume Change in Jobs from Dec. 2019	PA Volume Change in Jobs from Dec. 2007	PA Percent Change in Jobs from Dec. 2007	U.S. Percent Change in Jobs from Dec. 2007
Total Nonfarm Jobs	5,602,400	-480,500	-209,000	-3.6%	3.0%
Total Private Jobs	4,932,100	-443,700	-124,700	-2.5%	4.3%
Government	670,300	-36,800	-84,300	-11.2%	-4.1%

*Sources: Pennsylvania and U.S. Current Employment Statistics, Seasonally Adjusted*

In December 2020, seasonally adjusted -producing jobs in the Commonwealth were down 48,500 from December 2019. All three supersectors lost jobs in 2020. Mining & Logging had the largest percentage decrease over the year (-22.4 percent), but the absolute job losses in Manufacturing were more than five times as large. Construction experienced the smallest percentage decrease (-3.7 percent). Since December 2007, goods-producing jobs declined in both the state (-13.4 percent) and the nation (-8.0 percent). Pennsylvania's trends were driven by Manufacturing, the biggest of these supersectors, where jobs decreased by 17.8 percent in the state compared to only an 11.0 percent decrease in the nation. Mining & Logging jobs also decreased in both the state (-2.8 percent) and the nation (-19.3 percent), but Pennsylvania benefitted, in part, from the Marcellus Shale boom.

As seen with goods-producing jobs, service-providing jobs in the Commonwealth were also down in December 2020. Since December 2019, PA has lost 432,000 service-providing jobs – an 8.3 percent decrease over the year and a 1.7 percent drop from before the Great Recession. Except for Federal Government and Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities, both of which experienced minimal increases, jobs in service-providing sectors fell in 2020. The largest decrease in volume and in percentage of jobs was in the Leisure & Hospitality supersector – particularly the Accommodations & Food Services sector – which was hit hard by the pandemic mitigation efforts to.

Since December 2007, service-providing jobs outperformed goods-producing jobs in both the state and the nation. Pennsylvania's fastest-growing service-providing sectors have been Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities; Health Care & Social Assistance; Professional & Technical Services; and Management of Companies. Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities (28.9 percent) was the only sector in Pennsylvania to outperform its national counterpart. Information, which decreased by 25.9 percent, was the worst performing sector, followed by Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-23.7 percent). Information and Government sector declines reflect longer-term trends as does the growth in jobs in Health Care & Social Assistance. Growth in Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities reflects a shift from brick-and-mortar retail toward on-line purchasing, which was amplified in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Within each industry sector, there are many different career opportunities. Many of the dominant occupations are found on Pennsylvania's In-Demand Occupation List (PA IDOL), which highlights occupations with the most significant workforce needs. The PA IDOL includes more than 250 occupations of today, tomorrow, and the future that have the greatest demand. Not all occupations with a lot of demand, however, are attractive targets for workforce

development. Some high demand occupations experience high turnover, as opposed to employment growth, so it's possible these occupations would benefit from strategies to reduce turnover rather than train more workers to fill the available openings.

*(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.*

Looking forward, Pennsylvania's demographics and technological advancements will be key factors in the evolution of the commonwealth's economy. Employment activity in all sectors stress the dynamics of an aging population's need for more health care, transition of baby-boomers from worker to retiree, constant technological changes, and continued transformation of the state's economy from that of a goods-producer to a service-provider. Certain industry sectors, as highlighted in the following table, employ an even larger concentration of older workers, and will face additional difficulty finding enough replacements to fill employment demands.

Sectors with the Highest Volume of Older Workers	Sectors with the Lowest Volume of Older Workers
Utilities (32.5%)	Retail Trade (24.9%)
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing (31.3%)	Construction (24.8%)
Manufacturing (31.2%)	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (24.4%)
Wholesale Trade (31.2%)	Information (24.3%)
Other Services (29.7%)	Admin/Support & Waste Mgmt & Remediation Svcs (23.3%)
Public Administration (28.8%)	Mining, Quarrying & Oil & Gas Extraction (23.0%)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting (28.4%)	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (23.0%)
Educational Services (28.2%)	Accommodation & Food Services (14.2%)
Transportation & Warehousing (27.7%)	
Management of Companies & Enterprises (26.7%)	
Finance & Insurance (26.2%)	
Health Care & Social Assistance (26.0%)	

*Source: Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership, 2020Q3*

Pre-pandemic projections estimated that from 2018-2028, Pennsylvania's total employment would be expected to increase by 318,680 (5.0 percent) to over 6.6 million. This projected growth rate was down slightly from the previous set of projections (5.5 percent) and less than

the U.S. rate (5.2 percent). Again, however, these estimates were developed prior to the onset of the pandemic. While it is unknown at this time exactly what the long-term economic impacts of the pandemic and ensuing recession will be, it is probable that they will depress the overall employment levels below the volumes once expected for 2028.

Based on the available pre-pandemic employment projections, growth was expected to be greatest in the Education & Health Services, Professional & Business Services, and Leisure & Hospitality sectors. With an increase of more than 166,000, Education & Health Services was projected to add the most employment through 2028. Employment levels in Professional & Business Services was expected to increase by just over 56,200. Finally, Leisure & Hospitality employment was projected to add more than 48,000 by 2028 but this industry sector was hit extremely hard by the pandemic and is less likely to rebound as quickly as some other industry segments.

In addition to employment growth by volume, it is also important to look at growth rates. In Pennsylvania, robust growth rates were expected for all three segments of the Construction industry - heavy & civil engineering, construction of buildings, and specialty trade – resulting in an overall growth rate of 8.2 percent for the industry. Conversely, driven largely by the continued contraction of publishing and telecommunications, the Information sector was expected to decrease employment by more than 2,600 (-3.1 percent). Both Manufacturing and Government sectors were also projected to see employment decreases through 2028. Manufacturing was projected to decline less than the past round of projections and significantly less than in the U.S. overall (-5.0 percent). The largest employment declines were anticipated in apparel manufacturing and printing & related support activities. Government showed a slight employment decline overall in this round of projections, driven by Federal and State employment reductions. Local government was projecting gains through 2028.

Modest economic growth coupled with an aging workforce will continue to create opportunities for job seekers in all major occupational groups. Eight of the 12 occupational groups were projected to have growth rates above the statewide overall growth rate of 5.0 percent. Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians & Support Workers had the fastest growth rate of 12.9 percent (just over 80,000 workers). The Computer, Engineering & Science group, which contains the largest number of STEM occupations, was expected to add less employment, about 26,000, but at the third-fastest rate (8.0 percent). Only three occupational groups – Office & Administrative Support, Production, and Sales & Related – were projected to experience measurable employment declines through 2028 with losses of 29,600 (-3.1 percent), 8,640 (-2.2 percent), and 2,850 (-0.5 percent) respectively.

Employment growth, however, is only one component in determining the annual need, or demand, for workers in any occupation. Each year, Pennsylvania was expected to have a need for nearly 772,000 workers across all occupational groups. Only 4.1 percent of annual demand is due to economic growth. More than nine out of every 10 openings exist to replace workers who leave the occupation and/or retire. Some occupational groups with low growth rates have high levels of demand. These occupations tend to require less education or specific skills sets, and workers don't stay long in these positions. It is important to note that the overall demand for workers in occupational groups with slower-than-average growth or even decline, such as Office & Administrative Support (108,368) and Production (43,852), greatly outpace the overall need for workers in other groups with strong growth, such as Construction & Extraction (31,839) or Computer, Engineering & Science (29,565).

To fully understand Pennsylvania's emerging workforce needs, it is important to consider the information from all angles. Occupations with the largest employment growth by volume are often traditional occupations with a large employment base and a consistent need for workers, while occupations with the fastest employment growth rates are often emerging. From another angle, occupations with the largest annual demand are primarily entry-level jobs that have a sizable need to replace workers regularly but often do not pay family-sustaining wages.

Employment Growth by Volume	Employment Growth by Percent	Largest Annual Demand
Personal Care Aides	Statisticians	Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers
Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers	Physician Assistants	Cashiers
Registered Nurses	Home Health Aides	Retail Salespersons
Home Health Aides	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Laborers & Material Movers
Laborers & Material Movers	Information Security Analysts	Personal Care Aides
Cooks, Restaurant	Nurse Practitioners	Waiters & Waitresses
Nursing Assistants	Personal Care Aides	Office Clerks, General
Software Developers, Applications	Operations Research Analysts	Customer Service Representatives
Janitors & Cleaners	Actuaries	Janitors & Cleaners
General & Operations Managers	Health Specialties Teachers	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers

*Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Employment Projections (2018-28)*

*(iii) Employers' Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.*

For nearly two decades, Pennsylvania has been a leader in sector-driven workforce initiatives. This approach, featuring the identification of industry clusters and the establishment of employer/worker consortiums, has enabled workforce development policies to be data-driven and employer-focused, while also meeting the career goals of workers. Industry credentials, postsecondary education, and college degrees will become more important throughout the next decade, as will a shift to life-long learning along a career pathway. Educational requirements of most occupations will shift away from short-term and moderate-term on-the-job training lasting no more than one year towards long-term training and some amount of formal education. Pennsylvania has set a goal of 60 percent of Pennsylvanians holding a college or industry-recognized credential by 2025. According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education



Data System, or IPEDS, Pennsylvania was home to more than 350 postsecondary and higher education institutions in 2019, including 14 community colleges, 14 state-owned institutions, and four state-related universities, so the commonwealth is well positioned to effectively meet this goal and the needs of the future workforce. This sector-strategies approach also supports systems change at the state and local levels by aligning and coordinating workforce development, education, and economic development in a collaborative way to serve workers and employers.

When analyzing employment needs in the Commonwealth, industry clusters can take on strategic importance because activities that benefit one group member will generally have positive effects on other members of the cluster. An industry cluster consists of a group of industries that are closely linked by common product markets, labor pools, similar technologies, supplier chains, and/or other economic ties. They are used to:

- Create a consistent definition that allows for workforce comparison across regions;
- Identify major employers for building Industry Partnerships;
- Provide a basis for occupational and skills analysis of shared workforce needs; and/or
- Direct resource allocation for jobs in demand that will offer career pathways leading to family-sustaining wages.

Currently, Pennsylvania concentrates workforce strategies around 12 industry clusters. Along with employment trends and average wages, the strength of a cluster is often evaluated using a location quotient (LQ) which compares a cluster's share of local employment with its share of national employment. A LQ greater than one implies a competitive advantage in an area. While the table looks at statewide LQs, many industries are highly regionalized and are even more competitive than the statewide LQ suggests. Regional and local plans will pick up on this fact as partners develop local and regional priorities.

Cluster (or sub-cluster) Name	Employment (2020)	National LQ (2020)	Wages (2020)
Advanced Manufacturing (AM)	408,558	1.01	\$62,944
AM - Chemicals, Rubber & Plastics (AM - CRP)	77,484	1.24	\$63,702
AM - Electronics (AM - E)	59,212	0.77	\$71,363
AM - Metals (AM - M)	122,083	1.45	\$65,479
AM - Vehicles & Vehicle Equipment (AM - VVE)	149,779	0.83	\$57,156
Agriculture & Food Productions (AFP)	176,406	0.86	\$51,013
Bio-Medical (BM)	89,569	1.27	\$124,892

Cluster (or sub-cluster) Name	Employment (2020)	National LQ (2020)	Wages (2020)
Building & Construction (BC)	355,274	0.91	\$63,526
Business Services (BSV)	703,094	0.97	\$96,599
BSV - Media, Advertising & Marketing (BSV - MAM)	123,656	0.94	\$100,159
BSV - Operational Services (BSV - OPER)	215,402	0.94	\$60,806
BSV - Professional & Consulting Services (BSV - P&C)	364,036	1.00	\$116,569
Education (ED)	525,460	1.01	\$57,933
Energy (ENGY)	126,357	1.14	\$86,094
Health Care (HC)	1,070,848	1.24	\$60,229
Hospitality, Leisure & Entertainment (HLE)	458,257	0.82	\$23,530
Logistics & Transportation (LT)	267,008	1.15	\$53,678
Real Estate, Finance & Insurance (REFI)	303,725	0.95	\$97,132
Wood, Wood Products & Publishing (WWP)	90,328	1.23	\$58,785

Source: *Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2020 Annual Average)*

Industry clusters have also served as the basis for the creation of Industry Partnerships (IPs) – employer/worker consortiums that bring together companies with similar products, markets, and human resource, and workforce development needs. The intent of IPs, through prudent investments, is for Pennsylvania to address the workforce and economic needs of employers, thereby helping these industries grow while creating career opportunities for its workforce and increasing productivity.

Pennsylvania was among the first states to extend training and career-building efforts beyond individual companies to networks of companies in specific industries. IPs foster industry collaboration on incumbent worker training, school-to-career and other workforce pipeline initiatives, career pathways, recruitment and retention, and other human resource challenges. These types of collaboration can help strengthen skill alignment, increase entry-level employment opportunities, enhance recruitment and retention of talent, and lead to the creation of more high-paying jobs. Pennsylvania continues to build on its IP work through the Pennsylvania Industry Partnership model.

At the close of 2019, Pennsylvania's economy and labor market were sending mixed signals regarding their futures. Recovery from the Great Recession had been extremely long and not overly robust. Most data indicated a continued, incremental growth phase was probable, but some indicators pointed to the possible beginning of a downturn. Positivity continued in the first two months of 2020 but were quickly erased with the onset of a short, but deep recession in March and April of 2020.

It is impossible to talk about economic or workforce data in 2020 without acknowledging the effects of the pandemic. While the pandemic-induced recession was the shortest on record, neither the economy nor the labor market had returned to their pre-recession levels in Pennsylvania by the end of 2020. Pennsylvania's monthly unemployment rate peaked at 16.2 percent in April 2020 and the average rate for the year was 9.1 percent, an increase of 4.6 percentage points from 2019. The state's annual average employment declined 6.4 percent to 5,808,000, its lowest level since 2003. Likewise, the average level of unemployment rose to 580,000, a 100 percent increase. After two consecutive annual increases, the labor force declined by 1.7 percent as both employed and unemployed people left the labor force due to concerns of exposure at work or to care for family members. Over the year, Pennsylvania's labor force participation rate decreased 1.1 percentage points to 62.1 percent, which is slightly higher than the nation (61.7 percent, a decrease of 1.4 percentage points). The labor force participation rate for males in PA was 66.9 percent, down 1.3 percentage points from the previous year, and for females in PA was 57.7 percent, down 0.9 percentage points. Effective workforce and economic development strategies are needed to ensure continued economic recovery and a return to work for the states' unemployed.

The following table provides a summary of Pennsylvania's labor force for 2020 including data for persons with disabilities, veterans, older workers (those 55-plus), persons of color, and persons of Hispanic ethnicity. For comparison, similar data is provided for the U.S. The chart demonstrates that Pennsylvania has employment disparities for certain target populations, including individuals with disabilities, people of color, and people of Hispanic ethnicity.

	Total	Persons with Disabilities	Veterans	Older Workers	Persons of Color	Persons of Hispanic Ethnicity
PA Labor Force (LF)*	6,387.9	264.0	314.1	1,705.8	1,061.1	445.8
PA Employed*	5,807.9	232.5	290.4	1,560.7	897.8	381.5
PA Unemployed*	579.9	31.2	23.7	145.1	163.3	64.2
PA Unemployment Rate	9.1%	11.8%	7.6%	8.5%	15.4%	14.4%
PA LF Participation Rate	62.1%	17.7%	41.5%	39.9%	61.1%	67.6%
U.S. Labor Force (LF)*	160,742.0	6,123.0	8,918.0	37,905.0	36,311.0	28,970.0

	Total	Persons with Disabilities	Veterans	Older Workers	Persons of Color	Persons of Hispanic Ethnicity
U.S. Employed*	147,795.0	5,354.0	8,338.0	35,271.0	32,454.0	25,952.0
U.S. Unemployed*	12,947.0	769.0	581.0	2,634.0	3,857.0	3,018.0
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.1%	12.6%	6.5%	6.9%	10.6%	10.4%
U.S. LF Participation Rate	61.7%	20.5%	48.3%	39.2%	61.5%	65.6%

\* Reported in thousands

Source: PA data from Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS); U.S. data from Current Population Survey (CPS)

Among the unemployed, the hardest to serve are the long-term unemployed (those unemployed 27 weeks or more). The number of the long-term unemployed in Pennsylvania (84,500 in 2020) increased over the past year (up 24,700 or 41.3 percent) but decreased over the past five years (down 17,700 or -17.3 percent). Nationally, long-term unemployment increased 57.6 percent over the past year to 1,995,000. Due to a much larger percentage increase in the total number of unemployed, the share of those unemployed long term in PA dropped to 14.6 percent, compared to 15.4 percent for the U.S. Of the nearly 85,000 long-term unemployed in PA, about 53 percent were female while 47 percent were male. More than two-thirds of PA's long-term unemployed were White (67.2 percent) and one-quarter were Black (24.4 percent). Approximately 16.0 percent were of Hispanic ethnicity.

Another indicator of an economy's strength is the employment-to-population ratio (a measurement of the number of individuals working divided by the total population), which is affected by demographic and secular trends as well as the economic environment. In 2020, Pennsylvania's average employment-to-population ratio, as shown in the table below, was 56.5 percent as compared to 59.5 percent five years earlier. Overall, the nation experienced a slightly smaller decrease in this ratio over this period, falling from 59.3 percent in 2015 to 56.8 percent in 2020. In Pennsylvania, the ratio increased for the "other non-Hispanic" cohort over that period, while decreasing for all the other race/ethnic cohorts. The largest percentage point loss was among Hispanic males. The ratio decreased for all educational categories except for females with less than a high school diploma, which had a small increase. The widespread decreases in the ratio among almost all cohorts was most likely due to the impact of the large decreases in employment due to the pandemic.

	Total (2015)	Males (2015)	Females (2015)	Total (2020)	Males (2020)	Females (2020)
<b>Overall</b>	<b>59.5%</b>	<b>64.6%</b>	<b>54.8%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>52.4%</b>
White non-	60.5%	65.7%	55.6%	57.5%	62.4%	52.9%

	Total (2015)	Males (2015)	Females (2015)	Total (2020)	Males (2020)	Females (2020)
Hispanic						
Black non-Hispanic	53.0%	53.0%	53.1%	48.7%	46.5%	50.5%
Other non-Hispanic	55.0%	63.3%	47.5%	56.5%	66.3%	47.7%
Hispanic	60.9%	69.4%	53.8%	57.8%	62.0%	53.4%
Less than a HS diploma	31.8%	36.8%	26.7%	30.4%	33.5%	27.1%
HS graduate, no college	54.4%	63.1%	45.9%	49.7%	57.1%	41.7%
Some college or Associate degree	63.9%	67.4%	61.0%	57.9%	62.8%	53.9%
Bachelor's degree and higher	74.4%	77.2%	71.8%	70.5%	73.8%	67.8%

Source: Current Population Survey

*(ii) Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.*

According to IHS Global Insight's Population Projections, Pennsylvania's population is projected to grow by only 0.8 percent from 2020 to 2030. In comparison, the nation's population growth is projected to be 6.8 percent over the same period. While the state's overall population growth will be relatively low in the years to come, the age distribution is expected to change more dramatically. The number of Pennsylvanians aged 65 and over exceeded 2.4 million in 2020. The state's percentage of those aged 65 and over (18.2 percent) was the ninth highest in the nation. This is largely a by-product of the aging of the population born during the "baby-boom period" after World War II.

While the overall population will increase modestly, the labor force will shrink barring a substantial in-migration of workers to Pennsylvania. Short-run pandemic-induced labor shortages will be exacerbated by long-term demographic trends such as slow population growth and an aging population. Inevitably, baby boomers will continue to retire and leave the workforce in large numbers, taking with them key skills and knowledge that have supported industry growth and prosperity. Unfortunately, based on Pennsylvania's demographics, far fewer youth are available to enter the labor market to replace those who will be leaving. While technology, potential in-migration, and global competition will help alleviate some of the need for workers, a shortage of workers is likely to remain, which will force greater efficiencies and competition for key skills.

With an inevitable shortage of workers expected, Pennsylvania's workforce strategies also must focus on the skills and abilities of individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, individuals transitioning into the community from the criminal justice system, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients, and those who do not speak English well or at all, among other populations, to meet present workforce needs and future demand. In 2019, there were more than 1.6 million working age (18 years of age or older) individuals with disabilities living in Pennsylvania. They accounted for 16.3 percent of the state's working age population compared to 15.2 percent nationally. Veterans numbered almost 760,000 in PA in 2019, or 7.5 percent of the working age population. On average, about 23,500 adult TANF recipients were served each month in the past year. Lastly, in 2019, there were more than 280,000 individuals who did not speak English well or at all. Additional efforts will be made to support ex-offenders looking to re-enter the workforce, at-risk youth, and older workers who wish to remain employed. According to Current Population Survey (CPS) figures from 2020, 34.6 percent of Pennsylvanians aged 65 to 69 are currently in the workforce (employed or looking for work). In addition, studies have shown that current and future retirees have remained in or plan to stay in the workforce in some capacity.

*(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.*

American Community Survey, during the 2015-2019 period, Pennsylvania ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> among states in the share of adults (age 25 and up) with more than a high school diploma. Currently, 55.7 percent of such Pennsylvanians have participated in some level of postsecondary education. Another 34.8 percent are high school graduates with no postsecondary experience and 9.3 percent have less than a high school diploma. Strategies focused on these individuals are paramount to meeting the future demands of employers and achieving Pennsylvania's goal of 60 percent of Pennsylvanians holding a college or industry-recognized credential by 2025.

When assessing jobs available in the state, most employment was concentrated in occupations that fall into the on-the-job training category (3.4 million), but that category had the slowest growth rate (3.3 percent). Conversely, occupations requiring an advanced degree had the highest projected growth rate through 2028 (10.5 percent) but only employed about 320,000 individuals in 2018. This growth rate was primarily driven by an increasing need for Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, and Statisticians.

The shift from on-the-job training to some postsecondary education or an Associate degree is strongly connected with growth in Healthcare, Information Technology, and Construction jobs such as Physical & Occupational Therapy Assistants; Medical Assistants; Respiratory Therapists; Computer User Support Specialists; Web Developers; Plumbers, Pipefitters & Steamfitters; and Carpenters.

The most significant change from the previous set of projections (growth rates 1.0 percentage points lower) occurred in the long-term training and associate degree groups, with projected growth rates of 4.7 percent and 7.8 percent, respectively. These decreases were primarily driven by the reclassification of a few occupations such as Clinical Laboratory Techs and Maintenance & Repair Workers.

*(iv) Skill Gaps. Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.*

An equally important phase of Pennsylvania's workforce strategy is the identification of occupations that are critical to the success of local economies and the existence of a process that enables Pennsylvanians to acquire the necessary skills for those careers. The High Priority Occupation (HPO) process identifies those occupations that are in demand by local employers, pay a family-sustaining wage, and have higher skill requirements. Entry-level jobs that serve as an "on-ramp" to high-quality occupations may be considered as HPOs if the career pathway to existing HPOs is clearly documented. This innovative approach combines labor market data with regional stakeholder input allowing for a more complete picture of the actual workforce needs across the commonwealth. HPOs guide the allocation of training dollars for WIOA programs.

Pennsylvania's HPO process and Pennsylvania Industry Partnership efforts also have served as a method of evaluating occupational workforce needs. The HPO process requires Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) to conduct an analysis of in-demand skills and alignment with in-demand occupations. Employer input received through regional stakeholders provides real-world verification of any misalignment or gaps as, well as insight into potential skills mismatches. Some employers continue to struggle to fill critical workforce positions due to wages, benefits, geography, and other factors, while some individuals remain unemployed for extended periods of time or have difficulty finding employment. Many of the skills today's workers need are expected to be obtained through advanced education and training, resulting in relevant credentials that are valued by employers. However, feedback from many employers suggests that candidates lack basic employability skills necessary to gain and/or maintain employment, which the commonwealth is working on through Career Ready PA and the Future Ready PA Index, along with integrating employability skills into workforce development strategies.

## 2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Pennsylvania WIOA Combined State Plan includes the six Core WIOA programs and the following optional programs: Career and Technical Education Programs Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins); the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program; the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program; programs under the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSF); the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP); the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG); the Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (REO) Program; and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Collectively, the fourteen programs included in the Combined State Plan work to serve target populations, including individuals with barriers to employment and incumbent workers, in finding and maintaining employment, while concurrently meeting the talent needs of employers, as follows:

WIOA Title I Adult: This program serves participants age 18 or older in need of employment or career advancement, with priority of service given to participants who are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Veterans and covered veteran spouses who are eligible for the WIOA Title I Adult program receive veterans' priority of service. Individuals assessed as ready for work are provided career

services to assist them in finding existing employment opportunities. Individuals not ready for employment or looking for employment in a new field receive training to prepare them with the skills necessary to meet the needs of employers.

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker: This program assists workers before or after a layoff to help facilitate rapid reemployment. Dislocated workers with requisite skills may be directly referred to employers with hiring needs. Other dislocated workers may require training and other services to meet the skill requirements of employers.

WIOA Title I Youth: This program serves eligible youth and young adults through high-quality case management support toward educational attainment, including career guidance and exploration, summer and/or year-round work experience opportunities, and skills training along a career pathway for in-demand industries and occupations.

WIOA Title II Adult Basic Education: This program assists adults who need to improve their basic skills to access and succeed in career pathways. Local programs provide academic instruction at educational levels from beginning literacy through high adult secondary, including English language acquisition for English language learners when needed. Instruction and workforce preparation activities support college and career readiness. Other services support persistence and successful transition to employment or postsecondary opportunities by connecting students to social services organizations, partner programs, and entities in the workforce development system. Integrated education and training activities, which are aligned with local workforce needs and developed in consultation with Local Workforce Development Boards, employers, and training providers, prepare students for realistic, existing employment opportunities in their communities.

WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser: This program serves all jobseekers and employers – the universal customers – through both PA CareerLink® offices and PA CareerLink® Online with the twin goals of assisting individuals with placement in employment and assisting employers with workforce recruitment. Services range from job search and career counseling for jobseekers to customized labor market information and job fairs for employers.

WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR): This program helps persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and/or maintain employment. Its single-point-of-contact model helps any employer hire and on-board talented individuals with disabilities by connecting the employer with one OVR staff member who coordinates all program support. Support may include on-the-job training, as well as assistance in determining reasonable accommodations that could help increase the employment success of the individual with a disability.

Perkins: This program funds career and technical education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Perkins programs work with businesses to identify relevant technical standards, including national industry standards and credentialing opportunities, to ensure that program completers have the technical skills employers need.



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Employment & Training: This program supports TANF recipients through a range of activities based on individual needs as they pursue employment plans leading to long-term stability. The type and duration of the activity depends on the customer's work experience, education/training, and/or employment barrier(s) (e.g., childcare, transportation, education level, overall employability, etc.). All activities aim to increase the skills and employability of TANF recipients. The commonwealth requires each adult, minor head of household, or minor child ages 16 or 17 who is not in school to engage in work or an approved employment and training activity.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: This program supports SNAP recipients who are not also receiving TANF through a range of components designed to prepare participants for employment through education and training. Participation in the program is voluntary, and participants are placed in components based on an assessment of their individual needs. All components are designed to increase the skills and employability of SNAP recipients and participants receive a suite of supportive services while participating in the program, as well as for a retention period following placement in employment.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA): This program provides eligible workers with services and training to assist them in returning to the workforce following a layoff impacted by global trade. The services and training ensure that TAA recipients have the skills needed to find reemployment within the industry from which they were separated or to enter a new industry where employment opportunities exist.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG): This program funds Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff in PA CareerLink® offices. DVOPs work with veterans with significant barriers to employment, and LVERs work with employers to showcase qualified veterans for job openings.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): This program promotes part-time employment opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are age 55 or older and who have poor employment prospects. SCSEP utilizes Labor Market Information (LMI) to identify occupations most likely to hire older workers and prepares participants for those jobs. Some SCSEP grantees already work with PA CareerLink® Business Service Teams (BSTs) to develop employment opportunities for older workers. Employers recognize the benefit of hiring older workers, who are generally viewed as reliable, loyal, and ethical with well-established critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, and communication skills.

Community Service Block Grant (CSBG): This program funds Community Action Agencies that provide a diverse range of opportunities for participants to attain basic employability skills, occupation-specific skills, and work experience necessary to meet employer talent needs. The workforce services provided by these agencies varies among counties depending on the needs of the community. CAAs may also provide supportive services to assist participants in meeting needs that will increase the likelihood of success, including childcare, transportation, and/or employment specific needs.

Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO): This program supports increased collaboration and alignment of reentry planning and service activities among system partners to improve the justice-involved individual's ability to attain and retain a job along a career pathway that pays family-sustaining wages. Efforts described in the Combined State Plan will allow for greater coordination of services and activities provided by REO grantees with the workforce development system. Activities seek to not only get the justice-involved individual employed, but to provide the necessary supports to allow employment retention, thus reducing turnover and costs for employers providing job opportunities to justice-involved individuals.

The commonwealth coordinates and integrates service delivery among Core and other partner programs in several ways. One integration method is partnerships within the PA CareerLink® network. The PA CareerLink® sites are designated as comprehensive American Job Centers where, at a minimum, the customer can access services associated with all WIOA-mandated Core Programs. In addition, many partner program recipients may be able to receive services required under Pennsylvania's Perkins or TANF programs, to name two partner programs, through the PA CareerLink®. Integration of PA CareerLink® service delivery is critical for effective, efficient, and comprehensive services to customers. To that end, all partners have itemized the types and availability of services to be provided, and how the program will work in partnership, in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the PA CareerLink® offices.

To ensure greater coordination across partner programs, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry developed a policy document for the local MOU. The guidance underscores the responsibilities of the required partners in the one-stop service delivery system, including their involvement in the MOU process and the contributions necessary to appropriately fund the local system. You can find those documents here:

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>

Agency staff representing PA CareerLink® partners are collaborating on ways to better inform their local workforce system stakeholders of the significant value that results from a strong partnership. Local boards engaged and representatives from local libraries and local community and economic development agencies engaged in surveys to determine collaboration in their local areas. State staff are using those surveys to pilot networking sessions in those areas where it appears there was little or no engagement at the local level. The commonwealth will continue to work with all required partners in a similar fashion.

Within PA CareerLink®, program staff are aligned functionally, rather than by program, as appropriate for staffing capacity and customer volume. Aligned functions may include initial customer intake and assessment; career and training services for workers; and workforce services for businesses. This functional alignment offers direct access to a broader range of services that may be adapted and leveraged to address a customer's unique needs. Individuals seeking assistance, either workers or businesses, may access services in person at the PA CareerLink® or virtually through the PA CareerLink® online system. Staff are available to provide direct assistance to customers in both group and individual settings, and self-service resources are available in a Career Resource Room or Area.

Career pathways are another method that the commonwealth uses to coordinate service delivery. Local Workforce Development Boards lead career pathway development, in partnership with employers, workforce partnerships, secondary and post-secondary education providers, Titles I, II, and IV providers, and other programs, such as TANF. This model connects workers with a career path that will lead to a family-sustaining wage, in an in-demand career, while comprehensively addressing barriers to employment and offering individuals multiple entry and exit points to progress in their careers. This approach supports both workers and employers, through collaboration across Core and partner programs, and external partners.

Because the workforce development system must be responsive to the needs of employers, Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships are also a method of identifying and responding to employer needs. They address common workforce challenges and other, shared competitiveness needs of an industry. Relatedly, Pennsylvania emphasizes establishing new and expanding existing Registered Apprenticeship programs and pre-apprenticeship standards as part of relevant career pathway models. Recognizing parallels in methodology between the Career Pathways system and the Apprenticeship system, the intent is to directly align and integrate the Career Pathways System within the overall apprenticeship structure. The commonwealth is strategically working on doing so through several initiatives including the PASmart grant funding opportunities focusing on aligning secondary and post-secondary institutions and the career pathway system.

PA CareerLink® staff serving on a Business Service Team (BST) work with area employers to identify their talent needs and refer qualified candidates to fill those positions. This includes referring candidates for on-the-job or customized training when the referred individual is not immediately ready to take on the position's full duties. BSTs also have access to labor market information (LMI) that can help employers set wages and benefits that will attract high-quality candidates. BSTs communicate and collaborate with local organizations, state and federal agencies, and other entities with economic and workforce development interests to ensure coordination of services. This also includes coordination and connection with school districts, career and technical centers, and post-secondary providers who can serve as a source of talent for employers.

BSTs and other PA CareerLink® Staff will be provided information on how and why to connect jobseeker and employer clients to Registered Apprenticeship programs, how connecting job seekers with registered apprenticeships programs can help states and local areas meet their targets on the WIOA primary indicators, when to exit a WIOA client positively from the CWDS system even when still participating in a Registered Apprenticeship, and how to appropriately utilize workforce funding to support Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship programs.

*(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.*

The commonwealth strives to consistently provide excellent service to its workforce development customers in all 23 Local Workforce Development Areas across the state, led by 22 Local Workforce Development Boards. Consistency in service delivery also supports alignment of services across programs and across the commonwealth. Memoranda of Understanding

(MOUs) among Core and partner programs help ensure defined roles, accountability, responsibility, and opportunities for collaboration and partnership. Further, the commonwealth supports staff training and development, as a well-trained staff increases program knowledge and understanding and promotes better service delivery. Identified areas of strength include:

- Strong relationships among agency executive leadership prioritizing collaboration on numerous workforce development initiatives and grant applications, and frequent sharing of information and best practices.
- Diverse secondary and postsecondary education and training opportunities in the state.
- A decade of experience working with sector strategies through programs like the Industry Partnership program, which has supported thousands of employers and trained over 100,000 employees since its inception and has been modeled by other states.
- A history of successfully applying for and implementing competitive federal grants.
- Ample Labor Market Information (LMI) through the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) and other sources to inform decisions and strategies.
- The Interagency Workgroup that is developing a series of asynchronous cross-training modules for workforce development system staff.

Identified areas for improvement include:

- Increasing the share of working-age adults who have postsecondary education or industry-recognized credentials.
- More effectively and comprehensively assisting customers with addressing their barriers to employment.
- Expanding cross-training opportunities for front-line staff engaging with customers, including workers and businesses, across all workforce development programs and initiatives.
- Increasing the accessibility, quantity, and quality of online, self-service PA CareerLink® options, along with direct customer access to live-person assistance via phone; Internet coaches and access points in recognition of an increasingly tech-savvy society and limited funding which makes it difficult to maintain the existing physical one-stop presence.
- Refining the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS), the system of record used by the commonwealth to collect participant data and report performance outcomes, to allow for more effective case management and information sharing for job seekers, employers, agency, and partner staff, including integrating CWDS with the case management systems of other partner programs or bringing partner programs into CWDS.
- Integration and alignment of educational services, especially Adult Basic Education and TANF services, within the workforce development system, including through co-enrollment of participants in Titles I, II, and TANF. Development and utilization of contextualized literacy programs are crucial to helping TANF/SNAP Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) clients and will be a component of alignment of educational services.

- Integration and alignment of workforce programs designed to serve specific populations and administered by other state agencies (e.g., programs for TANF and SNAP recipients operated by the Department of Human Services) with workforce programs administered by the Department of Labor and Industry.
- Making Labor Market Information (LMI) accessible and user-friendly for all customers of the workforce development system to inform their decision making, including workers, businesses, students, parents, educators, economic development professionals, and other stakeholders.
- Connecting early childhood education, k-12 education, Adult Basic Education, higher education and workforce development data into a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), to monitor education and workforce outcomes from early learning to career, and use this information to support continuous improvement of education and workforce initiatives.

The state will make significant investments in technology to improve service delivery and allow for collection and sharing of information necessary to support WIOA implementation. The commonwealth is currently conducting multiple focus groups to drive technology investment decisions.

*(C) State Workforce Development Capacity. Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.*

All Core and Partner programs work collaboratively and in partnership to effectively serve workforce development customers across the commonwealth. The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) and other sources gather, analyze, and provide labor market information (LMI) to inform workforce development strategies. While each program has clearly defined activities, as defined by law, the commonwealth leverages services and resources to best serve customers and meet its workforce development goals.

The commonwealth's alignment of programs will include establishing effective career pathways that combine guidance, education, training, and support services that prepare individuals for careers. The pathway system will include coaches who help guide individuals to appropriate programs and services given their needs and career goals. The commonwealth will promote co-enrollment to align complementary services to comprehensively serve customers and will encourage shared roles for guidance and support services within each career pathway program to prevent duplication of services.

Finally, the PA WDB hosts interagency meetings, on a monthly basis, attended by representatives from all Core and Partner programs. Individuals representing the core and partner programs also participate on the five standing and two ad hoc committees of the PA WDB.

## B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

*(1) Vision. Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.*

In Governor Wolf's first term, the administration focused on creating Jobs That Pay, Schools That Teach, and Government That Works. These goals continue to be a priority in this second term, along with developing career pathways, supporting sector strategies, better serving Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, addressing employment disparities, and reaching specific workforce development goals around credential attainment and expanding pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship. In addition to the requirements of WIOA, Pennsylvania is committed to a workforce system built on the foundation of increased alignment and collaboration, innovative strategies, and enhanced accountability.

Pennsylvania is focused on providing the highest level of service to all workforce development customers, including workers, businesses, students, parents, educators, economic development professionals, and other stakeholders, through collaborative efforts of all state and local partners. The commonwealth remains committed to increasing access to all customers, with increased attention to meeting customers where they are at. Barrier remediation and supportive services are of particular importance for Pennsylvania's workforce development system, as comprehensively addressing the challenges many of our customers face will allow them to not only get a job, but also help them develop the skills and credentials necessary to embark on career pathways leading to self-supporting and family-sustaining careers.

*(2) Goals. Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—*

*(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations.*

*(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.*

Pennsylvania has prioritized five broad goals for the workforce development system:

1. **Career Pathways and Apprenticeship:** Develop a comprehensive career pathways system in PA and expand career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential, degree attainment, with an emphasis on assisting individuals to address barriers to employment, earn a family-sustaining wage, and advance their career.
2. **Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement:** Engage employers and industry clusters through innovative strategies to improve the connection and responsiveness of workforce programs and services to labor market demand, including recruiting, training, and retaining talent.
3. **Youth:** Increase opportunities for all youth to experience work-based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, mentoring, and other experiences in the workplace, including developing employability skills.

4. **Continuous Improvement of the Workforce Development System:** Identify and enact system changes and improvements that enhance the collaboration and partnership between agencies and partners in the workforce development system.
5. **Strengthening the One-Stop Delivery System:** Implement improvements to one-stop service delivery to better serve all customers, including job seekers and employers.

The overarching theme throughout these five goals is the coordination across all systems and partners, both within state government agencies, and throughout the state and local systems devoted to developing Pennsylvania's workforce and economy. Prioritizing and achieving these goals will allow Pennsylvania's workforce development system to serve workers and businesses in the most effective ways possible.

### **Goal 1: Career Pathways and Apprenticeship**

It is of the utmost importance to serve individuals in a manner that meets those individuals where they are at, in order to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the needs of an ever-evolving economy. This means working to address any and all barriers to employment that individuals face and offering them multiple entry and exit points to progress in their careers. Apprenticeship is a key career pathway strategy, as it allows individuals to learn on-the-job while also earning a paycheck. The value of the apprenticeship model has led Governor Wolf to prioritize doubling the number of apprentices in the Commonwealth to 30,000 by 2025.

#### **1.1 The commonwealth will increase the creation of registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, particularly in non-traditional occupations, as part of its career pathway system building efforts.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry, Education, and Community & Economic Development will work collaboratively to assist employers, education and training providers, and local service providers in developing new registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. The commonwealth will measure progress by tracking the number of new registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs created, and the increase in the types of occupations where registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships are available to job seekers.

#### **1.2 The commonwealth will increase recruitment efforts of registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs to increase the number of individuals from non-traditional populations, such as women, minorities, re-entrants, and persons with disabilities, into these programs, while also ensuring opportunities are available to both youth and adults.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry and Community & Economic Development will work collaboratively to make registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities available to these populations and recruit non-traditional and under-represented populations

into these opportunities. The commonwealth will measure progress by tracking the increase in the percentage of non-traditional and under-represented populations participating in these programs, across existing registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, and the programs that are being newly developed.

**1.3 The commonwealth will promote Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for all transition-age youth with disabilities.**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Labor & Industry, in partnership with the Departments of Human Services, and Education will collaborate to encourage transition-age youth with disabilities to take advantage of opportunities available to them. The commonwealth will measure progress by tracking the number of individuals receiving Pre-ETS services and the number of these individuals that are provided career awareness education, specifically The Career Index Plus (TCI+) Plus and labor market information (LMI).

**1.4 The commonwealth will increase public awareness of the career pathways model and program design, in an effort to build a career pathways system.**

All partner agencies and programs will prioritize educating customers about career pathways in Pennsylvania and creating opportunities to develop new, and expand existing, career pathways programs. The commonwealth will measure progress by tracking the educational programming available to customers, including workshops, LMI training, and through the utilization of online resources, and tracking the work of Local Workforce Development Boards in developing career pathways programs.

**1.5 Increase exposure to career awareness and exploration activities for K-12 and postsecondary students, as well as adult learners, as a strategy related, but not limited to, dropout prevention, increased knowledge of career opportunities, and exposure to business and industry in students' communities.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry, Human Services, and Education will focus on increasing career awareness and exposure activities. The commonwealth will measure progress by tracking the number of these activities, and the number of individuals that participate in them.

**1.6 The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will continue to maintain a standing Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee, charged with developing policy recommendations related to interagency collaboration and coordination around career pathways and apprenticeship programs and priorities, and implementing the career pathways and apprenticeship related goals set forth in the WIOA Combined State Plan. The committee will update the full board on goal progress and execution.**

The Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee will meet regularly and update the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board at its quarterly meetings.



## **Goal 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement**

Pennsylvania recognizes that it is imperative to work with the business community to ensure training programs and resources are aligned with the workforce development and human capital needs of businesses. By strategically engaging with businesses, the commonwealth will be best positioned to make sure employers have the opportunity to work collaboratively with training providers and educational institutions as they develop curriculum and help to prioritize the types of training and education needed by employers in an environment where resources are limited. Pennsylvania's Industry Partnership program supports this work by convening employers within the same industry cluster to collectively address issues facing those companies and enhance their economic competitiveness.

### **2.1 The commonwealth will promote Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships funded through Industry Partnership grants, with a focus on business-identified priorities.**

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, in coordination with the Department of Community and Economic Development, will administer the grant program for Pennsylvania's Industry Partnership program. The commonwealth will measure the impact of this program in several ways. For workers trained through Industry Partnership funds, Pennsylvania will track increases in wages, credentials, and retention. For businesses participating in these partnerships, Pennsylvania will track the number of jobs created and retained, and their economic impact. The commonwealth will also track career awareness activities, in terms of both the number of events and the number of individuals participating, and partnerships will be measured in terms of their ability to braid and leverage resources, the number of employers participating, and the number of events these partnerships engage in.

### **2.2 The commonwealth will increase local coordination between business engagement staff at each agency through the Engage! Program to more effectively provide businesses with both workforce and economic development services.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry and Community & Economic Development will utilize the Engage! Program to better coordinate when working with the employer community to more efficiently communicate with businesses and to minimize employer fatigue. The commonwealth will measure this goal by the number of companies in the Engage! Program and the number of Departments utilizing the program.

### **2.3 The commonwealth will expand access to online education and training programs that result in a credential or certification of value.**

All partner agencies and programs will make this a priority. The commonwealth will measure progress in meeting this goal by the number of individuals served in online training, including those that receive a credential or certificate, and by tracking the performance outcomes of those served online.

**2.4 The commonwealth will encourage employers, including those that receive state funds from economic development and other programs, to utilize the public workforce system. The commonwealth will increase employer awareness and use of the one-stop system to recruit and retain talent, to diversify their workforce by hiring Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, and provide information of other benefits of using the one-stop system.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry, Education, Human Services, and Community & Economic Development will coordinate efforts on this goal. The commonwealth will measure progress in meeting this goal by tracking the increase in the number of companies registered with PA CareerLink®.

**2.5 The commonwealth will increase engagement with the business community on issues related to Employment First, accessibility standards, disability talent recruitment, Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines compliance, disability etiquette, and the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Labor & Industry, in partnership with the Department of Community and Economic Development, will lead efforts on engaging the business community on this priority. The commonwealth will measure progress in meeting this goal by tracking the number of Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) consultations, no-cost reviews of employer's workplace and public area accessibility, number of employer requests for OVR talent, and the number of disability etiquette trainings.

**2.6 The commonwealth will increase collaboration and coordination between the OVR and local workforce development systems when using on-the-job training models.**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Labor & Industry, will lead this effort. The commonwealth will measure progress in meeting this goal by tracking the number of OVR customers enrolled in on-the-job training.

**2.7 The commonwealth will increase inter-agency career readiness engagement activities and partnerships for students and educators by engaging with business and industry.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry and Education will work collaboratively to address this priority. The commonwealth will measure progress in meeting this goal by tracking the number of these activities.

**2.8 The commonwealth, led by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, will continue to maintain a standing Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement Committee, charged with developing policy recommendations related to interagency collaboration and coordination around sector strategy and employer engagement programs, and**

**priorities and implementing the sector strategy and employer engagement goals set forth in the WIOA Combined State Plan. The committee will update the full board on goal progress and execution.**

The Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement Committee will meet regularly and update the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board at its quarterly meetings.

### **Goal 3: Youth**

Pennsylvania recognizes the priority that WIOA places on serving Youth and commits to prioritizing services to these individuals, who comprise our future workforce. Engaging young people early in their lifelong career journey creates a unique opportunity to help them find a successful career pathway and engage them around life-long learning. For youth with barriers to employment, early identification of their strengths and challenges can allow for better identification of supports that means smaller investment of time and resources than if supports were not identified until later in life.

#### **3.1 The commonwealth will identify and implement evidence-based models to facilitate effective youth workforce program planning and investments.**

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board and all partner agencies will coordinate efforts on this priority. The commonwealth will measure progress toward meeting this goal with the already established definitions of “evidence-based” assessment criteria, as approved by the PA WDB in 2020, as well as the evaluation of programmatic services, and the identification of data-driven models, including the use of performance outcomes for those receiving services. This data will be used to inform the continuous improvement of future programming.

#### **3.2 The commonwealth will identify, share, and advocate for effective practices in engaging opportunity youth, including those leading to increased co-enrollment of opportunity youth in WIOA Core and partner programs, when relevant, to ensure that appropriate funds are leveraged to provide necessary services to these individuals. The commonwealth will also encourage the use of Individual Training Accounts when serving opportunity youth.**

All partner agencies will prioritize ensuring the increased local recruitment of opportunity youth and establishing higher awareness of, and access to, the strategic programs and services available to them. The commonwealth will measure progress toward meeting this goal by tracking the number of opportunity youth served, as well as the number and types of workforce services received. The commonwealth will also measure the increase in the number of opportunity youth successfully co-enrolled for multiple services across programs including, but not limited to, ABE, TANF, and OVR, and the number of ITAs these individuals are provided with, when it helps support their overall career goals.

**3.3 The commonwealth will increase opportunities for youth in registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs and establish new partnerships with secondary and postsecondary institutions to achieve this goal.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry and Education will coordinate on this priority. The commonwealth will measure the increase in the number of youth entering registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, the performance outcomes for those individuals, and the number of new registered programs created at secondary and post-secondary schools.

**3.4 The commonwealth, via PennSERVE, will continue to promote and encourage service opportunities with AmeriCorps and require all WIOA regional and local plans to include AmeriCorps, when available, as a referral option for young people, particularly opportunity youth.**

The Department of Labor & Industry, in partnership with PennSERVE, will focus on this goal. The commonwealth will track the increase in the number of youth, and specifically opportunity youth, enrolled in AmeriCorps State programs. Pennsylvania will also require the inclusion of AmeriCorps programs in WIOA regional and local plans, where AmeriCorps programs are available.

**3.5 The Commonwealth will continue to promote and encourage opportunities in YouthBuild and Job Corps programs and require that these priorities be included within all WIOA regional and local plans, when available.**

The Department of Labor & Industry will prioritize opportunities for these programs and measure the number of youth, and specifically opportunity youth, enrolled in these programs. Pennsylvania will require these programs to be part of WIOA regional and local plans.

**3.6 The commonwealth will continue to support youth with disabilities in the attainment of competitive, integrated employment by increasing paid work experience opportunities and other career exposure experiences, such as job shadowing, mentoring, and employer mock interviews, in addition to supported employment services.**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Department of Labor & Industry, will collaborate with Local Education Agencies to achieve this goal. The commonwealth will track the number of youth with disabilities placed in work-based learning experiences and the number of youth with disabilities served who obtain competitive, integrated employment.

The Departments of Labor & Industry, Conservation & Natural Resources, Education, and Human Services will coordinate efforts on this goal. The commonwealth will track career readiness and work-based learning experiences through the Future Ready PA Index.

**3.8 The commonwealth will increase awareness of the 14 required WIOA youth program elements, including financial literacy education, adult mentoring, leadership development opportunities, entrepreneurial skills training, etc.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry and Human Services will coordinate on this goal. The commonwealth will measure the increase in the number of services rendered related to the 14 youth program elements.

**3.9 The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will continue to maintain a standing Youth Committee, charged with developing policy recommendations related to interagency collaboration and coordination around youth programs and priorities and implementing the youth-related goals set forth in the WIOA combined state plan. The committee will update the full board on goal progress and execution.**

The Youth Committee will meet regularly and update the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board at its quarterly meetings.

**Goal 4: Continuous Improvement of the Workforce Development System**

Pennsylvania recognizes that the workforce development system requires constant evaluation in order to learn and adapt to an ever-changing labor market and economy. By focusing on continuous improvement, the commonwealth recognizes that there are always opportunities for improvement. Better communication and coordination related to the sharing of data, policy development, and overall system operations will help to eliminate silos within the system, duplication of efforts, and increase efficiency.

**4.1 Share data across partner programs to assist in the ability to coordinate services to participants and to track participant outcomes, to maximize the positive impact of limited financial resources, including expanding the commonwealth's Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and implementing a common intake form across all Pennsylvania CareerLink® locations.**

All partner agencies and programs will track where data sharing can be increased, including connecting early childhood education, K-12 education, higher education, adult basic education, and workforce development data into a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), to monitor education and workforce outcomes from early learning to career, and use this information to support continuous improvement of education and workforce initiatives. The accomplishments realized through more effective data sharing and creating a culture of information empowerment will be tracked and highlighted.

**4.2 The commonwealth will prioritize issuing joint guidance when two or more agencies have policies that impact the function of or collaboration among multiple agencies.**

All partner agencies will prioritize issuing joint-guidance whenever a policy impacts two or more programs. The commonwealth will track the increase in the issuance of joint guidance and will engage stakeholders on the effectiveness of joint-guidance and greater collaboration between agencies.

**4.3 Ensure program planning and policy development are demand- and data-driven, built on sound socio-economic and labor market information, recognize trends related to programmatic data and outcomes, and prioritize evidence-based models. The commonwealth will also use program evaluation as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of workforce development programs, initiatives, and strategies.**

The commonwealth will establish a definition of evidence-based, data driven models and effective practices and track the percentage of policies developed through evidence-based models, with the goal of ensuring all policy is data-driven.

**4.4 The commonwealth will streamline the occupational licensing process by removing barriers preventing qualified individuals from receiving occupational licensure.**

The Department of State will lead the effort on this goal. The commonwealth will track occupations where the licensing process has been made more efficient through the removal of barriers, as well as process improvements related to reciprocity for veterans and spouses and licensing improvements for additional targeted populations.

**4.5 The commonwealth will develop a dashboard to track all key performance indicators related to the workforce development system and implementation of the Combined State Plan, including developing state-driven metrics and elevating promising practices across the system.**

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will coordinate tracking all key performance indicators related to the workforce development system across agencies and develop and maintain the dashboard. The dashboard will be updated on a timely basis, as new data becomes available, and available online in an accessible, user-friendly format.

**The Commonwealth will encourage employers and educational institutions to accept work-based learning experiences as provisional credits and certifications, including military experience and training.**

The Departments of Labor & Industry, Conservation & Natural Resources, Education, Military & Veterans Affairs, and State will coordinate on these efforts. The commonwealth will track the number of employers and educational institutions utilizing this model.

**4.7 The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will continue to maintain a standing Continuous Improvement Committee, charged with developing policy recommendations related to interagency collaboration and coordination around continuous improvement programs and priorities and implementing the continuous improvement related goals set forth in the WIOA Combined State Plan. The committee will update the full board on goal progress and execution.**

The Continuous Improvement Committee will meet regularly and update the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board at its quarterly meetings.

**4.8 The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will continue convening the Interagency Workgroup beyond the submission of the WIOA Combined State Plan to ensure the continuous improvement of Pennsylvania's workforce system, and will maintain collaboration between agencies and programs.**

The Interagency Workgroup will meet on a regular basis to help ensure ongoing collaboration related to the implementation of the Combined State Plan and improvements to the workforce development system. Updates from these meetings will be provided to the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board as appropriate.

### **Goal 5. Strengthening the One-Stop Service Delivery System**

The One-Stop system, known in Pennsylvania as PA CareerLink®, is the primary touch point for the vast majority of customers, including job seekers, individuals looking to advance in their careers, and employers. Increasing the coordination among system partners, identifying efficiencies, eliminating duplication, and improving customer service are all essential functions of improving service delivery.

**5.1 The commonwealth will prioritize increasing online resources, and ensuring those online resources are available, utilizing shared space models, and enhance coordination across programs and services.**

All partner agencies will strive to highlight any efficiencies that are identified within the PA CareerLink® system. The commonwealth will measure cost savings and additional financial resources that result from these efficiencies.

**The commonwealth will expand customer access and services across the One-Stop system to engage new customers and increase the number of individuals being served by the workforce system through better partner relationships including, but not limited to,**

**local libraries and community-based resources and programs, as well as ensuring additional resources are available virtually, when possible.**

The Department of Labor & Industry will work with all partner agencies and programs to document system improvements including, but not limited to, increased hours when services are available, additional locations where services are available, and services that have been transitioned to allow virtual utilization. The additional number of individuals being served will also be tracked.

**5.3 The commonwealth will increase training to all front-line staff on all available program offerings to allow for informed internal and external referrals to additional services and facilitate serving the holistic needs of the customer.**

The Department of Labor & Industry will work with all partner agencies and programs to track the number of training hours staff receive and the increase in the number and types of trainings available. Staff will also be surveyed to measure increases in job related knowledge and identify where additional training opportunities would be valuable. A workgroup with members from the PA CareerLink® partner programs is developing a series of asynchronous online training modules to support this work.

**5.4 The commonwealth will promote innovative strategies for serving customers with barriers, including those with challenges related to digital literacy, capacity, and accessibility, through better customer engagement and support, as well as a focus on increasing awareness of community partners and available resources.**

All partner agencies and programs will coordinate to track increases in the number of referrals made, including populations that are being referred and where they are being referred. The commonwealth will also track the number of individuals with barriers, including those with multiple barriers, and the percentage of services that are provided to individuals with barriers.

**5.5 Business Service Teams will focus on collaborative efforts across programs to increase engagement with employers in a more coordinated way, especially as it relates to barrier remediation and worker recruitment.**

The Department of Labor & Industry will coordinate these activities, in partnership with the Department of Community and Economic Development. The commonwealth will track the number of business services events and measure the increase in the employer penetration rate and the number of repeat business customers. These teams will explore alternative mechanisms to engage with employers, including virtual engagement, as necessitated by the ongoing pandemic.



**5.6 The commonwealth will prioritize high-level customer service in facilitating more personal and customer-focused, customer-centered referrals and program design.**

This will be a priority for all partner agencies and programs. The commonwealth will measure the increase in the percentage of referrals that result in a successful connection and track all process improvements.

**5.7 The commonwealth will increase the number of individuals co-enrolled in all WIOA Core programs, when relevant, and other partner programs to allow increased access to additional programmatic and supportive services.**

This will be a priority for all partner agencies and programs. The commonwealth will measure the increase in the percentage of customers that are co-enrolled and the employment outcomes of co-enrolled individuals.

**5.8 The commonwealth will continue to increase the capacity of the Commonwealth Workforce Development System, the workforce development system of record, to include additional partners, programs, and resources, and to increase system communications, referral capabilities, and improve customer usability.**

The Department of Labor & Industry will lead efforts on this priority. The commonwealth will track and document all system improvements.

**5.9 The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will establish and maintain a standing One-Stop Service Delivery System Committee, charged with developing policy recommendations related to interagency collaboration and coordination around the one-stop system and implementing the one-stop system related goals set forth in the WIOA combined state plan. The One-Stop Committee will ensure that all core and partner programs have the opportunity to share any proposed changes to program operation that could impact PA CareerLink® operations in the commonwealth. The committee will update the full board on goal progress and execution.**

The One-Stop Service Delivery Committee will meet regularly and update the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board at its quarterly meetings.

*(3) Performance Goals. Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)*

**Title I - Adult**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	73.0%		75.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	71.0%		72.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$6,250.00		\$6,500.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%		64.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	40.0%		41.0%	

#### **Title I – Dislocated Worker**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	76.0%		78.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	75.0%		77.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$8,500.00		\$8,750.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%		68.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	38.0%		42.0%	

#### **Title I - Youth**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	66.0%		67.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter	62.0%		64.0%	

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
after Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$3,000.00		\$3,500.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%		66.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	58.0%		60.0%	

## **Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	47.0%		47.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	49.0%		49.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$5,450.00		\$5,450.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	37.0%		37.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0%		36.0%	

## **Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services Program**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	62.0%		64.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	62.0%		64.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$6,250.00		\$6,500.00	

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Program**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	53.0%	56.0%	55.0%	57.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	47.0%	47.0%	58.0%	48.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,900.00	\$4,900.00
Credential Attainment Rate	2.0%	20.0%	2.5%	21.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	32.0%	39.0%	36.0%	40.0%

### **All WIOA Core Programs**

	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

### **Additional Indicators of Performance**

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

*(4) Assessment. Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.*

All applicable content related to this prompt is outlined in the answer to (2) above. Tracking and assessment of these goals will be accomplished through multiple mechanisms: The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will continue to convene monthly meetings of an interagency workgroup, comprised of all core and partner programs, to discuss implementation initiatives and strategies, current progress on goals, and to identify opportunities for increased collaboration across programs.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board and the interagency working group has been collaborating with Pennsylvania's Office of Performance Through Excellence to track and report the progress on each WIOA Combined State Plan Goal on a periodic basis, to ensure all partners and stakeholders in Pennsylvania's workforce development system possess the most current information on where implementation stands, in order to make adjustments to strategy.

Finally, The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board will continue to engage with each of the standing committees aligned to the broad goals for the workforce system. Through the review of these goals, the committees will continue to identify goals and make recommendations, when appropriate, on system changes and enhancements that will help ensure the achievement of these goals.

Through this, Pennsylvania will continue to evaluate goals to determine where adjustments need to be made to strategies and measurement.

### C. STATE STRATEGY

*(1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23).*

Pennsylvania has a strong infrastructure in place to address both sector strategies and career pathways.

Pennsylvania has long been a national leader in pursuing sector strategies to support the workforce development system. Beginning in 2005, and enacted into law in 2011, Pennsylvania's Industry Partnership Program focuses on convening businesses operating in the same industry cluster, on a regional basis, in order to facilitate the identification of shared challenges and opportunities faced across the industry sector. Pennsylvania provides financial support to the partnerships, in the form of a competitive grants, to help enable these partnerships to collectively address their identified challenges and leverage opportunities. Businesses participating in these partnerships have used these resources for many things,

including, but not limited to, training workers in high-priority occupations from several companies on a cohort basis, addressing economic development priorities, developing curriculum for training providers and educational institutions, and promoting career opportunities and their regions generally.

The priority Pennsylvania places on career pathways is most clearly articulated in the PA Workforce Development Board maintaining a standing committee focused on Career Pathways and Apprenticeship. The state goals of this committee include increasing diversity in registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeships, increasing the types of occupations where apprenticeships are available beyond those traditionally available in the building trades, and increasing career awareness activities for all Pennsylvanians.

The Commonwealth is keenly focused on providing supportive services as a means of barrier remediation to assist workforce development system customers as they move along their career pathways. Many of Pennsylvania's goals in this WIOA combined state plan speak directly to the need to meet customers where they are, in order to assist those individuals in their pursuit of satisfying employment in jobs that provide self-sufficient and family sustaining wages.

*(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).*

Pennsylvania has committed to five standing committees of the State Workforce Development Board aligned to each of the five broad goals identified in this plan. These committees include: (1) Career Pathways & Apprenticeship, (2) Sector Strategies & Employer Engagement, (3) Youth, (4) Continuous Improvement, and (5) One-Stop Service Delivery. Each of these committees is focused on increasing alignment among the core and partner programs to achieve a fully integrated One-Stop system that delivers unparalleled customer service to all workers and businesses in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania also routinely convenes interagency meetings to ensure all partner agencies and programs are coordinating their efforts and identifying any duplicative efforts, so as to make the system as efficient as possible. The interagency convening provides a forum to share best practices and was instrumental in developing the goals set forth in this plan.

Pennsylvania utilizes both the State Workforce Development Board's committees and the interagency group as tools to address the identified weaknesses in section II(a)(2), including:

- Governor Wolf has a goal of increasing the share of working-age adults who have a postsecondary education or industry-recognized credential to 60 percent by 2025. Through increased investment in registered apprenticeship programs, STEM education, and other related strategies, Pennsylvania is well positioned to achieve this goal.

- The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board’s Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee completed a review of successful career pathway work across the commonwealth and is using this research to inform additional career pathway system development in the form of increased state guidance and by providing state resources for additional system building.
- The One-Stop Service Delivery committee of the State Workforce Development Board is focused on addressing the level of customer service and customer options within the PA CareerLink® system.
- Improvements to the system of record, the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS), are an ongoing priority. Of particular focus is increasing the ability of partners to be able to make referrals to each other through the system, and for partners to collaboratively serve customers.
- In conjunction with improvements to the CWDS system, the Commonwealth is developing a common digital intake for use at all Pennsylvania CareerLink® offices. This will help to ensure that comprehensive information is collected on every customer and will help to enhance customer referrals to the proper programs and services.
- The integration and alignment of Adult Basic Education services through co-enrollment and contextualized learning is prioritized to comprehensively serve customers in a more efficient manner.
- Pennsylvania is developing strategies to serve priority populations in a coordinated manner, by developing policies and programs collaboratively across agencies.

### III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

#### A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

##### 1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (Board) is the Governor’s business-led, industry-driven policy advisor on building a strong workforce consistent with the Commonwealth’s education and economic development goals. The Board’s mission is to ensure Pennsylvania’s workforce development system, across programs and agencies, helps jobseekers advance their careers and economic standing, and helps employers connect with skilled workers. The Board is responsible for recommending policies and strategies to support the continuous improvement of the workforce development system, including system collaboration, innovation, alignment, effectiveness, and accountability.

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board is governed by bylaws. Members serve three-year, staggered terms. Standing and ad hoc committees are formed as necessary. The bylaws require members to accept the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Support the development and implementation of Pennsylvania’s WIOA Combined State Plan and the Commonwealth’s workforce development goals and initiatives.
2. Be generally familiar with Pennsylvania workforce programs, and the laws and policies that govern them.

3. Provide strategic guidance on the Board's goals and initiatives.
4. Connect with workforce development stakeholders, including elected officials; business leaders; labor leaders; workforce, education, and economic development leaders; and philanthropic partners to encourage their involvement in the Commonwealth's workforce development initiatives and emphasize the importance of strategic investments in workforce development.
5. Connect with the leaders of new business enterprises in Pennsylvania to help them understand and become familiar with Pennsylvania's workforce and educational systems.
6. Actively participate on at least one Board standing or ad hoc committee.
7. Attend at least three Quarterly Meetings every year.
8. Complete all required state Ethics and Financial Disclosure forms annually.
9. Advise the Board of any potential conflicts of interest, request guidance from the Board if a potential conflict of interest is identified and recuse themselves or abstain from official Board deliberations and votes in a decision-making capacity if a conflict of interest is confirmed.

The Board must have a quorum at the Quarterly meetings to act on any formal motions offered in person. If a Board member is unable to attend a Quarterly Meeting but wishes to participate in a vote taken at that meeting, the member may vote on formal motions in one of two ways:

1. By alternative designee: A member may vote through an alternative designee in attendance.
2. By proxy: A member may vote by submitting a proxy ballot prior to the Quarterly Meeting, designating another member in attendance to exercise their voting authority

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

### A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

The core programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Basic Education, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation – work in concert to effectively serve jobseekers and employers across the commonwealth. The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis and other sources gather, analyze, and provide labor market information (LMI) to inform workforce development strategies. While each program has clearly defined activities, as defined by law, the commonwealth leverages services and resources to achieve outcomes.



The Commonwealth's alignment of core programs will include establishing effective career pathways that combine guidance, education, training, and support services that prepare individuals for careers. The pathway system will include coaches who help guide individuals to appropriate programs and services given their needs and career goals. The commonwealth will promote co-enrollment to align services and will encourage shared roles for guidance and support services within each career pathway program to prevent duplication of services among the core programs.

PA CareerLink® offices designated as comprehensive are the physical locations where, at a minimum, the services associated with all WIOA-mandated partners' core programs are provided or available. In addition, many partner program recipients may be able to receive services required under Pennsylvania's Perkins plan or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, to name two partner programs, through the PA CareerLink® offices. Integration of PA CareerLink® service delivery is critical for effective and efficient service to customers. To that end, all partners have itemized the types and availability of services to be provided in a Memorandum of Understanding with the PA CareerLink®.

Within PA CareerLink® offices, program staff are aligned functionally, rather than by program, as appropriate for staffing capacity and customer volume. Aligned functions may include: initial customer intake and assessment; provision of career and training services; and the provision of services to businesses to include Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships. Functional alignment offers direct access to a broader range of services that may be adapted and leveraged to address a customer's unique needs. Individuals seeking assistance may access services in person at PA CareerLink® offices or virtually through PA CareerLink® Online. Staff are available to provide direct assistance to customers in both group and individual settings, and self-service resources are available in a Career Resource Room or Area.

Below is a summary of the activities, and alignment strategies, funded by each of the core programs.

#### WIOA Adult

The Adult program is one of three Title I core programs authorized under WIOA to assist participants, aged 18 or older, to attain employment. Veterans and spouses of veterans who meet WIOA Adult eligibility criteria, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient receive priority of service.

#### WIOA Dislocated Worker

The Dislocated Worker program assists workers, before or after a job layoff, in identifying basic skills training, on-the-job or customized training programs, and apprenticeship opportunities to facilitate rapid reemployment. Dislocated workers may be triaged at the point of entry to identify potential program eligibility. This process allows for the development of a streamlined service strategy that maximizes the funding of all entities in carrying out reemployment activities.

#### WIOA Youth

The Youth program serves eligible youth and young adults with support toward educational attainment, including: career guidance and exploration; work experience opportunities such as internships and pre-apprenticeships; skills training along a career pathway for in-demand occupations and industries; and supportive services. The goal for participants is either advancement into post-secondary education or attainment of employment with a self- or family-sustaining wage. Program services are prioritized for out-of-school youth (OSY) or youth with significant barriers to success, such as disability, pregnant or parenting youth, or those subject to the juvenile/adult justice system.

### Wagner-Peyser

The Wagner-Peyser Act funds services to all jobseekers and employers – the universal customer – through both PA CareerLink® offices and PA CareerLink® Online. Jobseeker services include: job search and job placement assistance; career counseling; provision of relevant labor market information; needs and interest assessments; proficiency testing; workshops on employment and reemployment topics; and help with the development of an individual employment plan. Wagner-Peyser also provides funds for employer, or business, services including: assistance with developing and uploading job postings to PA CareerLink® Online; referring qualified jobseekers to job openings; providing customized labor market information; and organizing job fairs and specialized recruitments.

### Adult Basic Education

Adult Basic Education (ABE) funds provide academic instruction at educational levels from beginning literacy through high adult secondary, including English language acquisition for English language learners when needed. Instruction and workforce preparation activities support college and career readiness. Other services support persistence and successful transition to employment or postsecondary opportunities by connecting students to social services organizations, partner programs, and entities in the workforce development system. Local programs co-enroll eligible Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants by providing basic skills instruction. Integrated education and training activities, which are aligned with local workforce needs and developed in consultation with Local Workforce Development Boards, employers, and training providers, prepare students for realistic, existing employment opportunities in their communities.

### Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation funds, through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), provide individualized services to persons with disabilities to assist them for preparing for, obtaining, or maintaining employment – both directly and through a network of approved vendors. OVR counselors continue to meet with businesses and with individuals with disabilities in PA CareerLink® offices to provide services and outreach. They collaborate with partners in the workforce development and education systems to develop strategies for streamlining and enhancing services and service delivery.

## **B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN**

The Pennsylvania workforce development system extends far beyond the core programs to include programs administered by numerous state agencies and quasi-governmental entities. Core and partner programs will collaborate to ensure that resources are leveraged, and services are not duplicated.

An interagency work group has been established and meets on a regular basis to consider ideas, discuss agency initiatives and goals, how partner agencies can help in achieving them, and share best practices. The interagency work group is a group comprised of executive and program level staff from the Departments of Aging, Education (PDE), Human Services (DHS), Labor & Industry (L&I), Agriculture (PDA), Community and Economic Development (DCED), Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), State (DOS), and Corrections (DOC), as well as the Governor's Office. The work group is coordinated by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board. The Secretaries of Labor & Industry, Aging, Agriculture, Corrections, Community & Economic Development, Education, and Human Services serve on the Workforce Development Board. Other agency secretaries are invited to participate in Board meetings when populations they serve are expected to be discussed.

Additionally, the Workforce Development Board created a committee dedicated to One-Stop Service delivery to promote greater connections between all agencies and partners providing services to Pennsylvania citizens. The committee has focused on ensuring the implementation of the One-Stop related goals outlined in the Strategic Elements section of this Plan.

There are numerous examples of specific collaborations among partner programs beyond the high level strategic and planning efforts taking place through the interagency work group and State WDB including:

- OVR works extensively with education partners including Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to coordinate the provision of pre-employment and other transition services for students with disabilities.
- The Departments of Education, Human Services, and Labor & Industry, along with other commonwealth agencies and executive office officials under the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities, created a written plan that implements Employment First as the policy of all commonwealth executive branch agencies; aligns funding, policy, and practice toward competitive, integrated employment; prioritizes competitive, integrated employment as the first consideration and preferred outcome of all publicly-funded services for all Pennsylvanians with a disability; and creates the conditions that lead to a material increase in the number of Pennsylvanians with a disability who are employed in a competitive, integrated job.
- WIOA Youth service providers coordinate with LEAs, adult education agencies, county human service offices, county assistance office income maintenance caseworkers, Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) student coordinators, EARN contractors, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, OVR, economic development entities, and other community and faith-based organizations to ensure youth participants have access to all the services they need to be successful in training activities and employment.

- The braiding of WIOA Title I-B funded programs with other youth-directed state and local entities allows comprehensive services to be offered to all eligible low-income populations under WIOA. Available TANF funding will continue to support WIOA year-round services and summer employment activities.
- Title II providers align services with WIOA Local Plans and coordinate with other available education, training, and social services to address community needs. Programs provide initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, in support of local workforce activities to support dislocated workers.
- Perkins postsecondary providers assist job seekers in identifying their interests and abilities and aligning these skills needs to training and financial resources to assist with training. Training is linked to the state's In-Demand Occupation (IDOL) list and is designed to lead to credential attainment. Both credential attainment and IDOL alignment assist job seekers in securing employment with family-sustaining wages.
- All trade-impacted workers should be co-enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program through Title I to ensure that all individuals receive the full range of assistance available to Dislocated Workers. The Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO) provided a Guidance Memo to all local areas encouraging co-enrollment. The bureau is currently finalizing a policy mandating co-enrollment for trade customers with Title I partners.
- The Community Education Councils (CECs) network, as designated by PDE, will align training development efforts with the overarching strategies of the commonwealth to increase the education and training delivery to residents of rural communities.
- The DOC will continue the working relationship and partnership with WDB, L&I, and PA CareerLink. PA CareerLink staff come into the SCIs to provide information on the services available at least quarterly. In addition, DOC works with PDE and DCED to assist with the Career Pathways framework sustainability. OVR has been involved in some of the SCI Reentry Job Fairs providing information to inmates close to release.
- The Division of Corrections Education, within DOC, coordinates with PDE staff for a variety of reasons. Most importantly, PDE approves the Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma program. This program was developed to allow a student to utilize high school credits earned while on the streets in conjunction with credits earned while they are incarcerated in order to earn a PDE recognized high school credential. One of the required credits for this diploma is the successful completion of the Pathway to Success course. This provides the career readiness preparation needed by DOC students. PDE staff provide training to DOC staff at various conferences throughout the year. This includes the PDE Special Education Conference, CEA Education conference, and various specialized trainings provided by PATTAN.

- PDE will partner with DOC to improve coordination of resources and systems at the state level, including providing professional development for Division of Correction Education (BCE) staff on key issues such as career pathways, rigorous academic standards, and the development of college- and career-ready skills. PDE's Bureau of Career & Technical Education (BCTE) offers regional meetings with secondary schools to discuss best and promising practices related to workforce readiness and will extend these opportunities to DOC BCE staff and others who are committed to improving educational and employment outcomes for students in the criminal justice system.
- The Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and seven national Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) sponsors refer all individuals ages 55 and older to the PA CareerLink® centers to enroll in PA CareerLink® Online. PA CareerLink® staff reciprocate by referring SCSEP-eligible individuals to the AAAs and SCSEP partners as appropriate. In some cases, SCSEP staff are co-located at PA CareerLink® centers on a full- or part-time basis. SCSEP is the largest federal workforce development program targeted to serve older workers.
- SCSEP sponsors seek to co-enroll participants in WIOA and OVR programs, as appropriate, to efficiently leverage available federal and state workforce development funds.
- When appropriate, SCSEP sponsors pursue the placement of SCSEP participants to serve as greeters, resource room aides, job developers, custodians, clerical aides, and customer service representatives in PA CareerLink® centers.
- The PA Centers for Independent Living (CILs) play an important role in helping individuals with disabilities achieve or maintain independence through supportive services and programs, including four core services: information and referral, peer support, advocacy, and independent living skills. WIOA provides new opportunities for PA CareerLink® to partner with CILs leading to improved employment outcomes for job seekers with disabilities. The comprehensive services provided by CILs to advocate for and support the independence of individuals with disabilities is a perfect match with the focus of the public workforce system. CILs, OVR, and PA CareerLink® centers are natural partners committed to improving the employment and economic advancement of all job seekers, including in-school and out-of-school youth, and adults with disabilities through collaboration.
- The PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources (PA Link) is a resource for elderly Pennsylvanians and adults with disabilities. The PA Link, through its collaborative network of partners including state and local public and private agencies improves access to information and provides referrals to long term living supports and services. Examples of services accessible through the PA Link network include assisted living and nursing home services, vocational rehabilitation services, and transportation services.
- OVR collaborated with Penn State's AgrAbility Program and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in developing the Farming and Agriculture Rehabilitation Management

(F.A.R.M.) policy to address the rehabilitation needs of farmers and ranchers with disabilities. VR Counselors, with technical assistance and guidance from Pennsylvania's AgrAbility Program, assess the rehabilitation needs of farmers and ranchers with disabilities in order to provide the specialized rehabilitative and assistive technologies they may need to maintain their employment.

- The PA Department of Agriculture works with the Department of Education (PDE) in administering agriculture education programs (a part of career and technology education) as well as the accompanying FFA programs and 4-H (in cooperation with Penn State University). The Department of Agriculture plans an evaluation of the agriculture education system in the commonwealth in conjunction with PDE and the Pennsylvania Association of Agriculture Educators in 2022.
- The Department of Community and Economic Development provides federal CSBG funding to the Department of Labor and Industry's Workforce Investment Areas (WIA) on behalf of the Community Action Agencies (CAA) in each WIA. The CAAs and the WIAs sign an MOU guaranteeing the CAAs a seat on the WIA board and assures that the CAAs will provide supportive services to the CareerLink customers either by having a physical presence in the CareerLink or via referral to assist participants in meeting needs that will increase the likelihood of success, including childcare, transportation, and/or employment specific needs.
- The Department of Labor and Industry's Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations through servicing the JVSG Grant can staff positions to develop veteran opportunities through employers. Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups. Where employer outreach is primarily accomplished by business services teams or like entities, LVERs are included as active members of those teams to advocate for veteran populations, including those that are ineligible for DVOP services.
  - Per Veterans' Program Letter (VPL) 03-14, LVERs participate in a variety of outreach activities such as:
    - Planning and participation in job and career fairs
    - Conducting employer outreach to promote the advantages of hiring veterans
    - Conducting job searches and workshops for veterans in conjunction with employers
    - Coordination with unions, apprenticeship programs, and businesses to secure and promote employment and training programs for veterans
    - Providing information to federal contractors on the recruitment process for qualified veterans
    - Building capacity within the service delivery system to ensure easier access to services for job-seeking veterans
    - Educating staff on current veteran employment initiatives and programs
  - LVERs are also responsible for "facilitating employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in a State under the applicable State employment service delivery systems" (38 U.S.C. 4104(b)(2)).

- The Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO), PA Department of Labor and Industry is working to embed a focus on apprenticeships within the State's workforce system and PA CareerLink® offices. In addition to regularly presenting Apprenticeship 101 webinars and providing additional resources to workforce staff, the ATO also supports the Registered Apprenticeship Navigator program, an apprenticeship program that trains professionals to develop and manage apprenticeship programs that has already trained nearly two dozen LWDB and PA CareerLink® staff. Other PAsmart Ambassador Network grantees are similarly required to partner with PA CareerLink® or One Stop Centers with a concentration on training or supporting Title One staff or other workforce development professionals who act as Ambassadors of Apprenticeship and grow this work. Starting in late 2022, the ATO hopes to offer strategic training for workforce development staff regarding serving clients through Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship by launching a Desk Guide for those working in our PA CareerLink® on how to link jobseekers to apprenticeship and workforce funding.
- At select state correctional institutions, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in conjunction with Department of Corrections (DOC) runs a job training and environmental education program that prepares individuals for careers in the environmental services sector while equipping them with the knowledge and empowerment to improve the environmental conditions in the communities to which they return. The multi-week training leverages expertise from educational providers, employers, and professionals to provide participants with a diversity of perspectives and career pathways.

#### C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

The commonwealth strives to provide consistently excellent service to workforce development customers across the state through technical assistance on standards, roles and responsibilities, and training for staff. Reviewing orientation programs, flow processes, and forms ensures consistency statewide and supports service alignment across programs. Trained and informed staff are critical to providing comprehensive, high-quality service. Labor & Industry's Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations offers a curriculum of courses open to all PA CareerLink®, Local Workforce Development Board, and partner staff and contributes to conferences, symposia, and workshops. These enhance staff's knowledge, skills, and professional development and promote collaborative and consistent service delivery. A work group comprised of staff from a multitude of partner agencies is developing additional online resources for cross training local, regional, and state staff on the services of the workforce development system partners. This training is intended to ensure that all staff can make informed internal and external referrals that meet the needs of one-stop system clients, especially those with barriers to employment.

The commonwealth recognizes the need for supportive services to customers, particularly those with barriers to employment, to achieve successful outcomes. While many services may be provided by the core programs, Local Workforce Development Boards are encouraged to obtain other services through partner programs and community- and faith-based organizations, based on local needs. Examples of coordination of supportive services include:

- Referrals to and/or assistance with transportation, housing, child care, and dependent care are available through PA CareerLink® offices and can often be leveraged with TANF and SNAP employment and training programs.
- Using a case management approach, Adult Basic Education programs connect students with other services: social services to address barriers to participation in Adult Basic Education programming as well as services to support students' transition to employment and/or post-secondary education and training.
- Perkins post-secondary programs are part of career pathways aligned to In-Demand Occupations and credentials; they are included on Pennsylvania's eligible training program list.
- OVR partners with local providers to increase resources for extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities in Supported Employment.
- OVR also collaborates with PA CareerLink® offices to better assist veterans who have disabilities in obtaining assistive technology to remove barriers in locating and maintaining employment. OVR staff stay current with assistive technology and training programs so they can provide equipment and training to customers who are veterans with disabilities.

#### D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

The commonwealth is committed to providing high-quality service to employers and works to ensure their active participation in the implementation of workforce development strategies throughout the state.

At the local level, PA CareerLink® staff serving on a Business Service Team (BST) work with area employers to identify their talent needs and refer qualified candidates to fill those positions. This includes referring candidates for on-the-job or customized training when the referred individual is not immediately ready to take on the position's full duties. BSTs also have access to labor market information (LMI) that can help employers set wages and benefits that will attract high-quality candidates. BSTs communicate and collaborate with local organizations, state and federal agencies, and other entities with economic and workforce development interests to ensure coordination of services. This also includes coordination and connection with school districts, career and technical centers, adult basic education programs, and post-secondary providers who can serve as a source of talent for employers.

Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) are included as an active member of all applicable Business Services Teams (BST). LVERs attend all BST meetings and are including in BST outreach activities. As an active member of the BST the LVERs advocate for all veterans served by the PA CareerLink® with businesses, industry, and other participating community-based organizations.



Employers also have access to PA CareerLink® Online for posting and tracking job openings; reviewing position candidates; and using other online resources to address their workforce issues and plans.

The commonwealth welcomes the addition of an employer satisfaction measure to the federal common measures. Measuring employer engagement and satisfaction provides LWDBs with actionable intelligence to identify best practices and weaknesses in serving employers allowing constant system improvement.

The commonwealth's additional efforts to ensure comprehensive, high-quality service to employers include:

- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation single-point-of-contact model helps employers hire and on-board talented individuals with disabilities. It connects an employer with one staff member responsible for coordinating all program support, including pre-screened talent recruitment and onboarding to ensure new-hire success.
- The commonwealth-funded Pennsylvania Industry Partnership (IP) program has been successful at enlisting businesses participating in the same general economic sector to collaborate and cooperate.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Aging has partnered with the Pennsylvania Homecare Association to improve the skills of current and future workers and consequently improve the home care provided to older individuals. This has been accomplished through the creation of 55 online Direct Care Worker training courses and through a grant to Westmoreland County Community College to train older individuals to become direct care workers.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education's secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs will collaborate and partner with employers who will assist in: informing and developing career pathways for targeted In-Demand Occupations; developing work-based learning opportunities for CTE students and career exploration activities for middle school students; developing pathways to high value industry certificates and credentials; developing a system of micro-credentials; and improving STEM focused career exploration.
- The PA Department of Agriculture is working with local industry partnerships to identify industry needs and develop relevant training programs to include seeking to establish apprenticeship programs for positions such as Agriculture Equipment Service Technicians and in other occupations, particularly in the dairy industry and organic farming.

- The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC) provides tax credits to employers for wages paid to individuals from targeted population groups. The program conducts outreach through PA CareerLink® and Local Workforce Development Board offices as well as a website.
- The Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN), a program managed by the Steel Valley Authority, offers layoff aversion services to manufacturing companies, upon request, at no cost. Core services include financial restructuring, operational restructuring and cost management, ownership transition, high performance workplace strategies and new market opportunities.
- Pennsylvania's Small Business Procurement Initiative designates a portion of state government contracts for companies with 100 or fewer employees that do not exceed established revenue ceilings. Allowing these small businesses to compete for contracts will, in turn, provide opportunities for them to add to their labor force.
- PA CareerLink® offices help employers, looking to fulfill USDOL Foreign Labor Certification requirements, recruit U.S. workers and determine whether qualified job applicants are available to fill their job postings.
- Adult Basic Education programs provide contextualized basic skills instruction and workforce preparation activities to support incumbent worker training.
- Career and Technical Education programs provide soft skills instruction, workforce preparation and technical skills instruction to support new worker and incumbent worker needs.
- The public library system can provide programs and tools, particularly for small business owners and entrepreneurs.

#### E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The commonwealth's workforce development strategy is integrally tied to education, starting with the secondary school system, to include career and technical schools, and continuing through postsecondary education to include community colleges, and public and private colleges and universities. All core programs have a history of engaging with the education system, in particular the career and technical schools and community colleges and will continue to develop those relationships. The core programs will work with the education system to support and develop career pathways identified by employers and the workforce system.

One key area of collaboration and cooperation is the transition from the workforce development program to postsecondary education. Title II case managers, OVR Counselors, Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) student coordinators, and WIOA and Wagner-Peyser employment specialists have established relationships with educational staff to support the successful transition of their customers to postsecondary programs. A collaboration between

the Pennsylvania Department of Education and providers of CTE Programs of Study works to align industry credentials to In-Demand Occupations.

A priority of the governor and of commonwealth agencies, as outlined in Governor Wolf's PAsmart Grants Framework: Principles and Funding Priorities, which was approved by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board in 2018, is "equity, diversity, and inclusion." Commonwealth workforce development efforts therefore seek to increase access to postsecondary and career and technical education specifically for historically under-represented and under-served students.

In serving individuals with disabilities, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) will continue to work collaboratively with local community colleges, career and technical schools and other Perkins recipients to explore the development of training programs that are implemented with universal design to train individuals with disabilities for competitive, integrated employment in jobs that meet local labor market demand. OVR will also work to develop and implement interagency agreements with community colleges and career and technical schools to fill unmet needs within the local workforce delivery system.

In serving veterans, the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs - Office for Veterans Affairs (DMVA-OVA) will continue to work closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and student veteran organizations at colleges, universities, trade schools, and other institutions of higher learning to create "veteran friendly" learning environments. DMVA will support partners in education with focused outreach and coordination with community partners while supporting veterans and their family members to take full advantage of educational benefits that they have earned. DMVA will leverage these education and training platforms to focus on job skills that meet the needs of employers within the regions. DMVA will coordinate with partners to link employers to these educational institutions and programs to ensure that we graduate skilled applicants who have the greatest potential to move successfully into employment.

The commonwealth strives to connect youth and adults seeking postsecondary education with available financial aid to include Pell and Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) grant programs. The Department of Labor & Industry has contracted for the training of workforce system staff and partners across the commonwealth on the use of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid in an effort to optimize the use of financial aid and to leverage all available funding sources to make post-secondary education affordable for workforce participants. This will also provide data to help shape future commonwealth policy to ensure that the goals of the statewide plan are met. The commonwealth also encourages those students, without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent, deemed eligible under ability-to-benefit for financial assistance to enroll in eligible career pathway programs. Contextualized high school equivalency test preparation programming will also be used as a mechanism for encouraging students without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent to enroll in eligible career pathway programs.

Postsecondary career and technical education is a critical partner in providing occupational training for adults and a proven skills-building strategy. Postsecondary career and technical education programs collaborate with Adult Basic Education programs to develop service

delivery models that support adults with basic skills deficiencies to successfully take advantage of these training opportunities.

It is the state's vision that all Pennsylvanians exiting basic education services, both through the traditional K-12 system and through Adult Basic Education, will be prepared to participate successfully in postsecondary level instruction without remediation. To support this vision, Title II Adult Basic Education providers are implementing the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. At the local level, many adult education providers developed relationships with postsecondary education providers. Students who do not earn a high enough score on placement tests at the postsecondary institution are referred to a local Adult Basic Education program for remedial work. After the student has demonstrated sufficient academic progress at the local adult education program, as determined by an approved standardized test, the student is referred back to the postsecondary institution. The commonwealth will build on best practices developed through these relationships. For example, in the most successful partnerships, both the adult education program and the postsecondary institution have points of contact for referrals. Also, the adult education and postsecondary programs have worked together to identify key content areas for the adult education program to cover to support successful transition to the postsecondary program.

In providing partner engagement and education to Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) providers, the Trade Grant Services (TGS) unit will provide continual grant services to institutions. These services include outreach to new schools, completion of TAA Master Agreement (TMA) and addenda when applicable with participating schools, provision of technical assistance to participating institutions, and monitoring of compliance with the Trade Act.

#### F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

In May 2022, the commonwealth issued as revised eligible training provider policy detailing initial implementation of eligible training provider provisions of WIOA. The policy outlines the requirements for becoming and remaining an eligible training provider in accordance with federal law and regulations. Guidelines may be revised later to ensure that eligible training providers and programs are aligned with career pathways once they are established.

New providers and programs seeking initial eligibility must, in general: provide program information; assure compliance with nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and ADA provisions; demonstrate effectiveness; and agree to collect and provide performance data. In order to maintain eligibility a provider or program must meet the minimum established performance criteria. Full details regarding initial and continued eligibility requirements can be found in the policy.

You can find the ETPL policy here:

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>

#### G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

Over the past six years, commonwealth agencies have engaged thousands of stakeholders across the commonwealth and worked with cross-sector partners from pre-K to postsecondary education, workforce development, and human services to improve career readiness for all students. There are now established structures that can continue to leverage the expertise and resources at the local, state, and federal levels for Pennsylvania's workforce development.

In 2017, Governor Wolf convened the Middle-Class Task Force, comprised of leaders in education, workforce, and economic development systems. The outcomes of the Task Force's report led directly to the development of the PAsmart initiative, which has invested \$70 million in its first two years in education and training needed for careers in high-growth industries. PAsmart supports the creation of regional workforce development and education partnerships such as STEM Ecosystems, the training of educators in computer science skills so that students are prepared for a high-tech digital economy, the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships, and next-generation industry partnerships. The governor's office also launched the PAsmart website to serve as a resource for commonwealth residents to identify the tools and resources they need to make education and career decisions.

The Task Force findings, and the governor's commitment to the vision of "jobs that pay" and "government that works," also led the governor to establish the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center. The Keystone Command Center is a group of state agency representatives from education, labor, industry, human services, and others, as well as representatives of labor and business. This cross-sector body elevates and seeks to align all workforce development efforts—whether the actions take place under the purview of education, labor and industry, economic development, or private industry partners—with the urgency that workforce issues demand in the current economic climate. The collaborative nature of the body facilitates the identification and elimination of barriers that confront residents of the state seeking to advance in their careers, as well as the barriers that face businesses and education and training institutions seeking to develop the workforce.

The Commonwealth provides training funds to qualified employers for new and existing employees through the Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA). This program is a unique, collaborative partnership consisting of community colleges, State-owned universities, and other educational institutions working together to be responsive to the needs of Pennsylvania's business community. Funding through WEDnetPA can be used for a wide range of incumbent worker training that can be categorized as either essential skills training or advanced technology training.

Collaboration between the PA Departments of Labor and Industry (L&I) and Education has leveraged state workforce development policies and federal programs in order to initiate and grow self-sustaining local initiatives. L&I has partnered with Pennsylvania community colleges to apply for federal grants to increase access to post-secondary education for non-traditional, harder to serve individuals. Each of the community colleges is a Perkins postsecondary recipient and each is expected to leverage investments to enhance access to career pathways. Additionally, in 2019, the PA Department of Education and L&I each contributed federal funding to a state initiative called Teacher in the Workplace that drives greater work-based learning and career-ready skills development in schools (including Career and Technical Centers), while fostering self-sustaining local and regional partnerships between educational institutions and businesses.

In addition to statewide efforts, Community Education Councils (CEC) provide a more targeted regional approach to workforce development where there are fewer postsecondary resources. CECs have historically leveraged other state and local funding to implement sector-based training provided through a variety of educational institutions in rural communities where campus locations are non-existent. CECs serve as an intermediary and broker of training programs based on identified need and demand.

The commonwealth will continue to work closely with postsecondary education partners, including all Perkins postsecondary recipients, to leverage federal, state, and local resources, including financial aid programs and veterans' benefits, to enhance access to educational opportunities. These efforts are essential in order to meet Governor Wolf's goal for postsecondary credential attainment, and to work toward the broader strategic vision of "jobs that pay, schools that teach, government that works."

#### H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

As discussed in the Strategic section of this plan, the commonwealth has embraced state-local collaboration, cross-sector partnerships, and a focus on barrier remediation to achieve its vision of career pathways to self-supporting, family-sustaining careers. Pennsylvania recognizes the importance of postsecondary credentials as part of such pathways. In 2015, Governor Wolf established the goal that 60% of Pennsylvania residents have some form of postsecondary education by 2025, in order to meet industry demand for skilled workers. In 2016, Pennsylvania's State Board of Education Council on Higher Education passed a Motion to Support this postsecondary attainment goal. To meet this goal, Pennsylvania has aimed to produce nearly 820,000 additional postsecondary credentials between 2017 and 2025.

Pennsylvania employs many strategies to help more residents earn recognized postsecondary credentials, including the following:

- **Fostering early awareness of postsecondary opportunities:** K-12 schools in Pennsylvania integrate the Academic Standards for Career Education and Work (CEW standards) into curriculum, addressing career awareness and preparation, career acquisition, career retention and advancement, and entrepreneurship. Pennsylvania is the only state to include a true K-12 Career Readiness Indicator as part of its federal accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act. The Career Standards Benchmark identifies career readiness activities aligned with the CEW standards in all public K-12 schools. This emphasis on career readiness expands younger students' understanding of the career opportunities, and the relevant postsecondary education and training, available to them.
- **Improving access to advanced coursework for all students:** PDE will work to expand the number of students enrolled in at least one advanced rigor course – including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment courses – each year, and to identify opportunities to improve equitable access to such coursework. Governor Wolf established a goal to increase the number of AP tests given in high schools by 46 percent by 2020.

- Leveraging networks and resources to guide postsecondary pathways:** Under Pennsylvania's ESSA Consolidated State Plan, local education agencies may use Title IV, Part A, and other federal funds, such as Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A, to support college and career exploration and advising, including hiring school counselors and other support staff to help all students, and especially underrepresented students, have the information and tools they need to gain awareness of college and career pathways and make informed decisions regarding their postsecondary future. Recognizing the critical role school counselors have on student success, PDE has also partnered with the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, public and private postsecondary institutions, and the Pennsylvania School Counselors Association over the past 18 months to identify opportunities for K-12 school counselors to explore data and connect with resources on postsecondary access and success.
- Improving awareness of college resources through regional partnerships:** The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) has fourteen Higher Education Access Partners strategically located throughout the commonwealth to provide postsecondary services to students, families, educators, schools, community partners and the public. Services include free financial aid presentations and completion sessions, programs to assist students with planning and preparing for postsecondary education, and professional training for school counselors and advisors. The Pennsylvania College Advising Corps also places recent college graduates as full-time advisors in underserved, rural high school schools across Pennsylvania to increase matriculation rates of their students.
- Improving financial access to post-secondary education by leveraging available funding streams through the optimization of the use of federal financial aid.** The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry has undertaken a project to provide training to approximately 1400 workforce staff across the Commonwealth on the use of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. This training will include the role of the FAFSA, the application process, how to use the financial aid report, the barriers to applying for, utilizing, and maintaining financial aid and the discussion of equity and access issues faced by workforce system participants. By increasing the understanding of the application process and how it impacts workforce participants will allow more of those participants to affordably obtain post-secondary credentials/degrees.
- Building seamless secondary-postsecondary transitions:** In accordance with the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act of 2018 ("Perkins V"), Pennsylvania requires postsecondary institutions receiving Perkins funding, including the 14 community colleges, to articulate with secondary schools that offer PDE-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs of Study. The Students Occupationally and Academically Ready (SOAR) Program allows qualified students enrolled in an approved career and technical Program of Study to receive college credit toward a diploma, certificate or degree in a similar program at a postsecondary institution. The SOAR program serves as a seamless pathway from secondary to postsecondary education and ensures students transition from level to another without delays or duplication of learning. Colleges use an electronic transfer and articulation system provided by the state to indicate the number of credits awarded to each program of study. *Award at least nine (9) transcribed technical postsecondary credits or equivalent clock hours to a matriculated student enrolled in a Program of Study*

*(POS) at the Postsecondary Institution.* Postsecondary Institutions may exceed the minimum number of postsecondary credits awarded. The highest number of credits awarded is 21.

- **Career and technical education as a path to industry-recognized credentials:** All PDE-approved career and technical education (CTE) programs lead to industry recognized credentials. Schools use the PDE Industry-Recognized Credentials for Career and Technical Education Programs ([pa.gov](http://pa.gov)) to identify industry-recognized credentials aligned to CTE programs in Pennsylvania's career clusters.
- **Credential attainment:** In 2019-2020, Pennsylvania participated in a Department of Labor cohort group of 9 states which was focused on credential attainment. The cohort group reviewed existing federal guidance and collaborated to create a credential attainment decision tree tool available on the Employment and Training Administration's website. Pennsylvania's cohort team, which consisted of individuals representing all WIOA core programs wrote, as part of the cohort experience, an aspirational plan for addressing credential attainment which includes the creation of a commonwealth multi-agency credential attainment policy. This future policy will inform Pennsylvania's credential determination process.
- **Recognizing prior learning:** Four of Pennsylvania's community colleges use a website and e-portfolio platform called College Credit FastTrack to translate prior educational, workforce, and life experiences into college credit and to establish common standards for prior learning assessment within the community college sector. The website guides students through developing and submitting a portfolio that highlights their prior learning experiences, including transfer credit, military service, workforce training, and badges. A community college faculty member then reviews the portfolio and determines how many credits are awarded. Led by Montgomery County Community College, College Credit FastTrack was made possible by a \$2.5 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.
- **Aligning credentials to career pathways for high priority occupations:** The commonwealth is working to identify and align credentials to career pathways for high priority occupations (HPOs). The commonwealth is also exploring the use of micro-credentials, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment, to allow for the attainment of skills in shorter segments and the receipt of an industry-recognized credential to demonstrate skill competency to potential employers. In addition, students enrolled in PA Department of Education (PDE)-approved career and technical education (CTE) programs can earn digital badges upon achieving a minimum score on the technical assessment, which serve as an indicator of their skills, performance, and achievement.
- **Prioritizing HPOs:** The PA-TIP program, administered by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), provides need-based awards to students enrolling in certificate programs less than two years in length for high priority occupations (HPOs) in several industry sectors.



- Facilitating postsecondary credit transfer:** The Pennsylvania School Code was amended shortly before the adoption of this plan, requiring all public institutions of higher education and all public-school districts to provide the Pennsylvania Department of Education with copies of each of the institutions' articulation agreements for inclusion in an electronic database that is web-accessible. The amendment also requires the posting of all agreements that award credit for an industry-recognized credential. The purpose of posting these agreements on the web-accessible electronic database is to increase transparency to students and allow them the ability to better plan their educational career. This will improve student's movement among and between institutions and allow them to graduate more quickly by removing the need to re-take courses.
- Leveraging state investments in workforce readiness:** The PAsmart initiative promotes the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships and invests in postsecondary education and training in computer science and STEM fields. The Pennsylvania Industry Partnership program, also supported at the local level through state grants, encourages trainings that result in a postsecondary credential by requiring all proposals to identify credentials/certifications to be obtained and by making credentials a required outcome measure. Governor's PAsmart Growing Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships initiative seeks to expand Registered Apprenticeships in new industries and occupations and aims to advance individuals along career pathways with secondary and post-secondary schools. Additionally, this initiative is intended to reach underrepresented populations, including women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, veterans, socio-economic disadvantaged individuals, individuals who speak English as a second language, individuals who were previously incarcerated, or individuals experiencing multiple barriers to employment. Through the PAsmart Growing Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeships funding, the hope is to make funding available for intermediaries to support the statewide Apprenticeship Ambassador Network through creating new or supporting existing local and/or regional apprenticeship ambassador networks designed to grow Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship in local areas. It is a requirement of grantees to partner with PA CareerLink® or One Stop Centers with a concentration on training or supporting Title I staff or other workforce development professionals who act as Ambassadors of Apprenticeship and grow this work.
- Pennsylvania-Specific Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Knowledge Product Creation:** The ATO is making substantial progress developing several knowledge products aimed at making it easier for potential sponsors to develop and register apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs as well as see the benefits of the framework and speak to the Pennsylvania-specific guidelines and processes. Knowledge products completed include but are not limited to registration guides for apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship aimed at helping potential sponsors gain an understanding of what is required to develop and register a program as well as a quick reference flow chart. Templates and examples were created for Job Books and Work Processes, and a series of 1-pagers were developed to help employers and job seekers better understand the components and benefits of RA & Pre-RA, and how to build and fund new programs.

- **PA Apprenticeship and Training Office Webpage and Digital Footprint Enhancement:** Two new apprenticeship websites were launched making it easier for employers and jobseekers to access resources specific to building or entering Registered Apprenticeships. The main site, housed within the PA CareerLink® One-Stop portal, provides an overview of the ATO, and has different sections aimed at providing relevant information and resources to employers/sponsors, job-seekers, and workforce professionals interested in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship. All of the ATO's newly created registration paperwork and guides, informational 1-pagers, templates and examples can be downloaded from the site, accessible at: <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Common/Apprenticeships>. The ATO's 'homepage', housed within PA Labor & Industry's portal, includes information on the ATO, information on the PA Apprenticeship and Training Council (PATC) (including Meeting Agendas and Notes), and links to more information on the PA CareerLink® website. It can be accessed at: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Workforce-Development/apprenticeship/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Increased Apprenticeship and Training Office Partnership with Career and Technology Centers Statewide:** The ATO forged a relationship with the Pennsylvania Association of Career & Technical Administrators (PACTA) in hopes of encouraging more Career and Technology Education Centers (CTCs) to invest in the apprenticeship framework concentrating mainly on registering their existing vocational programs as Pre-Apprenticeships where and when appropriate. This push toward aligning CTE programming with the pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship training model will allow for a direct pathway for participants into a Registered Apprenticeship, potentially allowing for priority consideration or advanced standing, thus fast tracking them through a Registered Apprenticeship program and ability to earn the completion credential as well as other potential industry recognized credentials at an advanced rate.

In addition to the strategies above, the commonwealth has developed specific initiatives focused on key populations and occupations to improve access to postsecondary credentials. These initiatives stem from the strategic vision to build career pathways to self-supporting, family-sustaining careers through barrier remediation.

- **Supporting student-parents:** The Parent Pathways Model, led by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, is a multigenerational, whole-family approach to provide wraparound support to low-income, single parents pursuing college or other postsecondary training options. The Governor's FY 19-20 budget made \$2.5 million available in the initiative's inaugural year to establish community-specific comprehensive models to support access to, and success in, postsecondary education and training for single parents.
- **Creating pathways for aspiring teachers:** Aspire to Educate is a program, piloted in 2019, that will help Pennsylvania attract, recruit, train, and retain a more diverse generation of teachers and school leaders. The pilot partnership among the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the School District of Philadelphia, and several postsecondary institutions in the Philadelphia area establishes three age-based program tiers to engage and support students and adults of color who are interested in becoming a teacher as they progress through secondary and postsecondary education.

- **Making postsecondary education affordable for foster children:** The *Fostering Independence through Education Act* of 2019 guarantees a free postsecondary education to youth and young adults who have been in the foster system at age 16 or beyond, regardless of adoption or “aging out.” Effective as of fall 2020, eligible students will receive a waiver for the cost of tuition at any institution of higher education in Pennsylvania, minus any monies provided through federal or state grants.
- **Focusing on residents who have some credits and no degree:** Pennsylvania has become one of six states to join the National Governors Association’s Educate for Opportunity project to connect postsecondary education and work. Both the National Governor Association and the Education Commission of the States are working with Strada Education Network on this initiative. Pennsylvania’s project focuses on learning more about the population of residents who have attained some postsecondary credits but no postsecondary credential, in order to understand what they need to advance in their careers and to help reconnect them with postsecondary education and obtain a credential where necessary. To promote this initiative, Labor & Industry awarded a Near Completer Demonstration Project grant, which is a 24-month long, \$8.2 million program which supports job seekers who have been displaced from employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic and who have prior but incomplete learning experiences. This project will develop new and innovative strategies to assist targeted job seekers that are within one semester or less of completing their industry recognized credential or degree. Targeted job seekers will receive support in enrolling and completing educational programs that will rapidly attach them to employment in a High-Priority Occupation. By supporting rapid credential attainment, the participant would be immediately able to enter the job market and earn family sustaining wages of more than \$15/hour in their field of study. The target number of participants served by coverage area is 300 for urban (Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties) and 200 for suburban (South Central and Lehigh Valley WDA’s).
- **Supporting TANF and SNAP recipients:** The Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) program, funded by the PA Department of Human Services (DHS), provides support and guidance to TANF and SNAP recipients attending Pennsylvania’s 14 community colleges. A KEYS student facilitator assists eligible students with identifying career goals, scheduling courses, applying for financial aid, transportation, and childcare needs.
- **Supporting rural students:** The Community Education Councils across the commonwealth extend program development activities with postsecondary institutions to ensure that residents of rural communities have access to credential-bearing training opportunities.
- **Supporting students with disabilities:** The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) will continue to analyze labor market demand and model service delivery systems to identify opportunities for industry-recognized certificates that lead to increased and improved employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

## I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's lead economic development agency. DCED encourages the shared prosperity of all Pennsylvanians by supporting good stewardship and sustainable development initiatives across the state. Driven by the needs of Pennsylvania's citizens, the agency acts as an advisor and advocate to provide strategic technical assistance, training, and financial resources to help communities and industries flourish. DCED also partners with sister agencies to work together to better integrate community, workforce development and economic development efforts to maximize impact.

DCED continues to promote coordination and collaboration among regional public partners through the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP), a network of business assistance partners designed to encourage regional coordination in community and economic development efforts. PREP partners are organized in ten regions across the state, offering one-on-one counseling, specialized workshops, online training, and financial incentives to new business ventures and existing companies looking to expand and grow. The commonwealth continues to use these PREP regions as the WIOA planning regions under WIOA. This has more closely aligned the coordination between economic and workforce development at the regional level.

Engage! is Pennsylvania's Business Retention and Expansion initiative which began in 2018. Engage! prides itself on experienced Economic Development and Workforce Development professionals listening to a CEO's challenges and opportunities and providing a customized Action Plan to provide assistance. There are a wide variety of resource providers serving as the fiscal agents for the initiative across the Commonwealth. The South Central PA Workforce Investment Board (SCPa Works) is the coordinator for the South Central region. Having SCPa Works as the Engage! coordinator has brought together economic development and workforce partners in this region to provide better service to companies by addressing their workforce challenges.

PREP and Engage! partners continue to use ExecutivePulse, a cloud-based customer relationship management (CRM) software platform, to document and coordinate partner outreach with companies. The workforce development partners use a CRM platform called the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). Working with the Department of Labor & Industry, an MOU was created to allow users of both ExecutivePulse and CWDS to see company interactions across the state. This provides immediate information sharing and coordination among all partners and decreases employer fatigue (many partners wanting to meet with the same businesses). The partners using both systems include the Business Services Teams, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, economic development organizations, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Industrial Resource Centers (IRC) and various Chambers of Commerce involved with PREP and Engage!

In addition to driving state economic development strategies, DCED is committed to workforce development efforts. Several program guidelines at DCED (PREP, Engage!, WEDnet and Training-to-Career) encourage the partnership of economic development partners with local workforce development boards as a part of workforce development efforts to ensure the needs of a region are being met and to eliminate duplication of efforts.

The department changed the name of the Business Financing deputation to Business Financing and Workforce Development. The Office of Workforce Development Initiatives within this deputation aims to improve the quality and skills of the commonwealth's workforce, helps businesses meet their workforce needs, and provides opportunities for businesses and workers to connect. The office works closely with other sister agencies in promoting internal workforce initiatives as well as collaborating with other agencies to learn about their workforce initiatives to promote them to businesses. The office has a full-time staff member dedicated to workforce development, along with administering workforce grant programs. DCED's workforce development related grant programs include: Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship, Manufacturing PA Training-to-Career, and the Workforce and Economic Development Network (WEDnet).

- **Manufacturing PA Training-to-Career Program (Training-to-Career):** This program is designed to help companies identify and train a skilled workforce while creating a workplace culture that allows the workforce to advance and the company to grow and compete in a competitive, global economy as a complement to existing programs. The projects in this program are short-term work-readiness training programs designed to give those with barriers to employment, the skills necessary to gain entry level employment in the manufacturing industry. The training developers work collaboratively with local manufacturers to identify and teach missing essential skills for entry level applicants for existing or near future open positions. The program also engages youth or those with barriers in awareness to building activities of career opportunities in manufacturing, and or advance capacity for local or regional manufacturers.
- **Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship (Apprenticeship):** The Apprenticeship program is a statewide program which offers assistance to registered apprenticeship programs. The program's goal is to increase apprenticeship availability to Pennsylvania employers to assist them with their talent recruitment and development. The grant funds through this program helps to cover the costs of the classroom training (real-time instruction) portion of an apprenticeship as well as books, supplies and small tools that stay with the apprentice throughout their training.
- **Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnet PA):** WEDnet has been in operation for 22 years and continues to provide qualified companies with incumbent work training. Since the inception of the program, DCED has invested more than \$265 million in essential skills and technical skills training reaching 22,135 Pennsylvania businesses and 1,284,015 employees. During the 2020-21 fiscal year, the WEDnet program invested \$8,180,966 in training, assisted 737 companies, and trained 20,741 employees.

At a state level, there are several collaborative efforts happening between workforce development and economic development. The Secretary of DCED continues to serve as a member of the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (WDB), ensuring that workforce development strategies align with economic development efforts. DCED continues to serve as the lead agency in updating of WIOA Broad Goal 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement (for the 2020 State Plan and Modification). DCED also has several staff members, including the DCED Deputy Secretary-Business Finance and Workforce Development, as members of the

interagency workgroup and the State Board's Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement Committee.

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), with the support from DCED, continues to work collaboratively on the promotion and technical assistance to the 30+ industry partnerships across the commonwealth. Some industries these partnerships represent are Manufacturing; Healthcare; Warehousing/Logistics; IT; Hospitality/Leisure; Business Services; and Building and Construction. These partnerships are working on issues such as developing the future pipeline of employees, business to business connections, awareness of opportunities in these industries as well as promoting the region to attract people to come and stay.

Through Executive Order: 2019-02, Governor Wolf created the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center (Command Center). The Command Center addressed Pennsylvania's workforce challenges by convening a public-private partnership to target public programs and resources to address Pennsylvania's workforce shortage and talent needs, recommend action to reduce or eliminate impediments to employment, and better align Commonwealth resources and private sector needs to position Pennsylvania as the keystone for a skilled workforce and competitive business climate. DCED, L&I, the Department of State, the AFL-CIO, PA State Chamber of Business and Industry and the Team Pennsylvania Foundation are the six co-chairs of the Command Center, along with many other agencies participating as well.

In January of 2020, the first Command Center Annual Report was released. Within the report were over 40 recommendations for addressing some of the workforce challenges. The Command Center continues with monthly meetings. In between meetings, working groups focusing on Childcare, Training and Education, Government Infrastructure, Reentry and Licensure meet to discuss how to implement the related recommendations.

## **B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES**

All elements are answered in this section

### **1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF-**

Pennsylvania has strong operating systems and policies in place to support implementation of the Governor's Strategic Vision.

Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) is the Commonwealth's system of record. All core partners use CWDS to capture, track and monitor WIOA activities. Additionally, Eligible Training Providers use CWDS to post programs and program information as well as to upload performance information. Individual customers engage CWDS to apply to and save jobs to their personal dashboards and schedule workshops and other activities. Employers use CWDS to post job orders, search for talent and report new hires.

CWDS has been modified to capture WIOA activities in alignment with PIRL reporting.

Recent enhancements to CWDS include and interface with Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development's (PADCED) CRM, ExecutivePulse. This interface allows workforce business service teams (BSTs) to view PADCED's employer information and case notes. Access to this information has led to more collaborative employer engagement and has reduced duplicative services that lead to employer fatigue.

Each partner-user must sign a user agreement and abide by the Commonwealth's security policies.

PA CareerLink® is the public facing facet of CWDS, which has numerous additional features for job seekers to include skills assessments, career exploration tools and videos, Labor Market Information (LMI), interview training, and listings of eligible training providers. Similarly, it provides additional tools and resources for employers.

The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) serves as the primary database and system-of-record for tracking and recording services, activities, and outcomes for workforce development programs funded under Titles I, III, and IV. Activities are recorded by funding stream to identify outcomes for each investment. CWDS allows dual- and multi-program enrollment; customers provide intake information once. The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis uses the data collected through CWDS to generate federal and state performance reports. Although CWDS is the case management system for Labor & Industry workforce development programs, such as TAA and RESEA, the commonwealth uses other case management systems for different agencies' education and workforce development programs.

The PA Department of Education Division of Adult Education (DAE) uses the e-Data v2 web-based system to collect Title II program data for federal and state reporting purposes. e-Data v2 is a real-time data system with a web-based design that allows users and DAE staff access to individual programs' adult education and family literacy data. DAE staff and local program staff also use a corresponding Access template to further analyze program data to improve and expand services to participants. For example, reports in the template identify students who have demonstrated measurable skill gain and may be ready for referral to the local PA CareerLink® site for employment or training. This Access template can be expanded to include additional reports that support implementation of the State's strategies to establish career pathways, increase opportunities for out of school youth and adults with basic skills deficiencies, and engage employers.

Federal Perkins recipients submit data into the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS). Data is collected at the recipient, program, and student level for each of the mandated performance measures. Data reports are provided on an aggregate level. The entities can pull student level reports. PDE works with Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) on an annual basis to align Perkins Programs of Study to occupations defined as in demand. The resulting product is a CIP/SOC crosswalk. Federal Perkins recipients also utilize the data produced by CWIA to connect with regional and local employers. Perkins recipients are required to work with the LWDBs to interpret the data and to apply the data to educational program needs of the region. The LWDB also provides assistance to the Perkins recipients in identifying employers they can partner with.

The TANF system of record is the Department of Human Services-Customer Information System (eCIS). eCIS sends referral information to DHS business partners who then utilize CWDS to enroll DHS recipients in contracted Employment and Training programs. The DHS services and related information entered in CWDS are transferred back to CIS via a nightly batch process. Participants may be dual enrolled in a DHS and an L&I program. Duplication of services is avoided due to the integration of the PA CareerLink® centers and DHS EARN centers and by using specific service codes to identify WIOA funded services.

**2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (E.G., CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM**

PA CareerLink® customers are universally offered Wagner-Peyser, or labor exchange, services. Co-enrollment in Wagner-Peyser (WIOA Title III) and WIOA Title I programs occur regularly and are encouraged; Title I eligibility is assessed and determined at the local level. The Common Measure Program Activity Log in CWDS tracks periods of participation by program for all USDOL-funded workforce development programs. Activities of all programs are tracked in this centralized location, allowing for the creation of reporting and program participation cycles. Participants who are co-enrolled exit for measurement after 90 days have passed since the provision of services from any program in which they were participating.

Relevant state guidance and policies include, but are not limited to:

- Measurable Skill Gains and Youth Placement in Education or Employment data entry guides;
- WIOA Data Element and Acceptable Eligibility Verification guide;
- Guidance for WIOA Title I-B Programs, which aids staff in determining program eligibility and appropriately entering services into CWDS;
- PA CareerLink® System Procedure Manual, which discusses CWDS system use policies, how to enter customer information (both job seeker and employer), how to post jobs, labor exchange services, and other pertinent information;
- Eligible Training Provider Policy, which addresses initial and continued eligibility requirements for the statewide Eligible Training Provider List;
- Local Workforce Delivery System - Memorandum of Understanding policy, which addresses how the local area one-stop delivery system is funded by partners;
- PA CareerLink® System Operator policy, which addresses the coordination of one-stop system services;
- Co-Enrollment policy, which addresses the need to enroll customers currently enrolled in a one-stop system program into a WIOA Title I program;
- Priority of Service policy, which establishes the implementation of priority of service for WIOA Title I Adult programs customers;
- e-Data v2 Instruction Manual and Glossary, which provides technical guidance for using the eData v2 system; and
- PDE's PIMS Secondary and Postsecondary Instruction Manual, which outlines each data element and reporting requirements.



Pennsylvania's workforce system partners (Departments of Aging, Human Services, Education, Corrections, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and others) work in concert to execute a multi-agency review process for local and regional workforce system plans. Partners closely coordinate the review of content, contact with Local Workforce Development Boards, operational implementation, technical assistance and compliance requirements tied to local and regional plans.

Continuing this partnership, and new for PY20-24, the state created and deployed multi-agency workforce system policies (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding) that brought partners together to ensure alignment, eliminate overlap and focus efforts on targeted, efficient and effective service provision.

You can find Pennsylvania's MOU policy and guidance here:

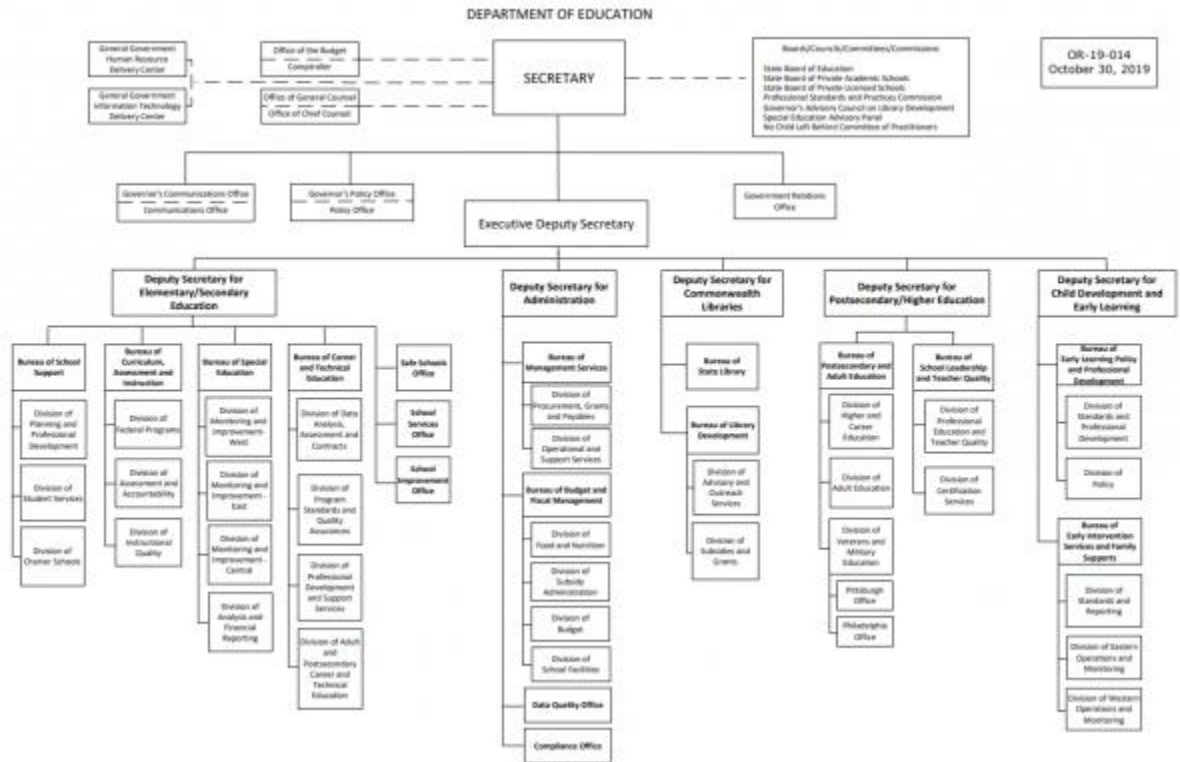
<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>

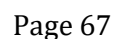
Finally, state agencies are collaborating to create a networking space in those local workforce development areas where partner surveys reveal the need for strengthening relationships, as well as need for understanding what each partner's contributions to the local workforce service delivery system.

### 3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

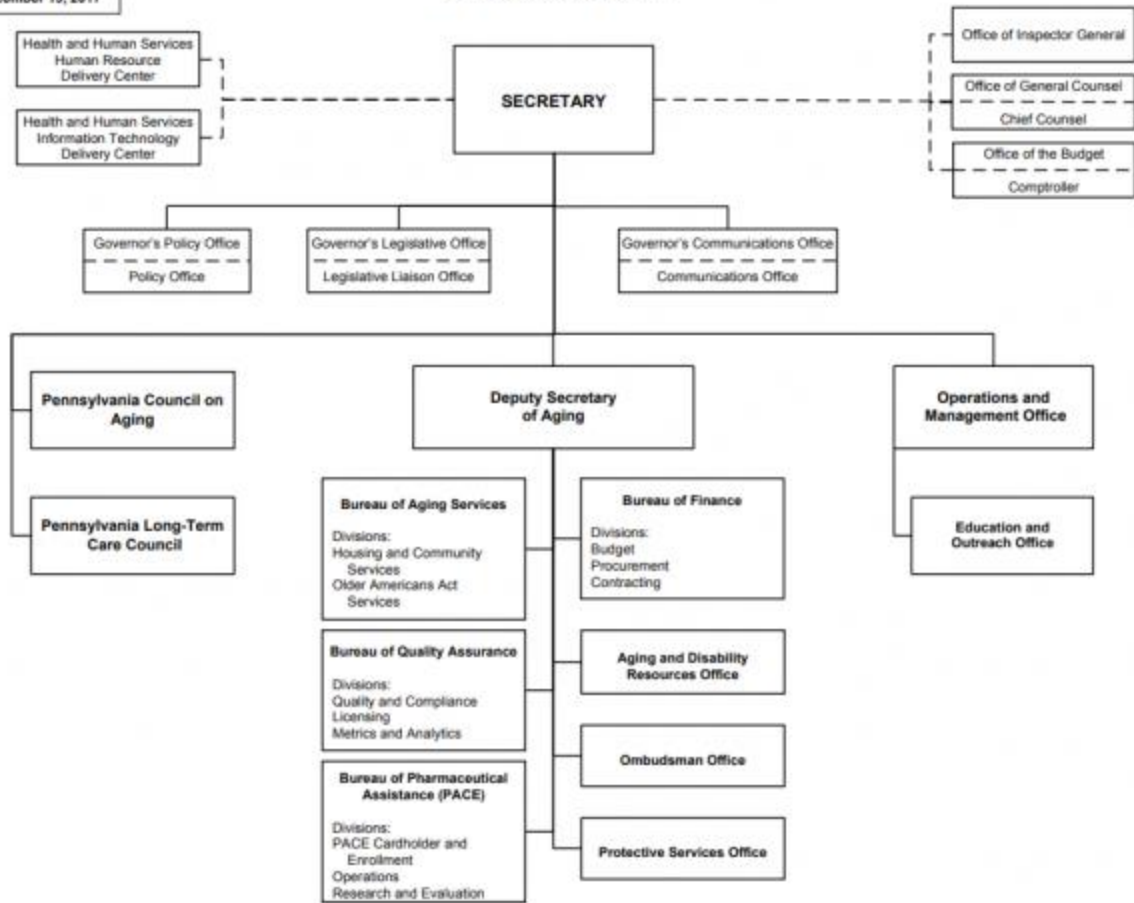
#### A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

The operation of the workforce development system is a shared responsibility among the commonwealth, LWDBs, state and local elected officials, the core WIOA partner programs, other partner programs and PA CareerLink® operators. Five of the six core programs are administered by the PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) with the PA Department of Education (PDE) administering Adult Basic Education. Additional partner programs are housed within L&I, PDE, and the Departments of Aging, Corrections, Community & Economic Development, and Human Services. Organizational charts for each of these agencies are provided below.

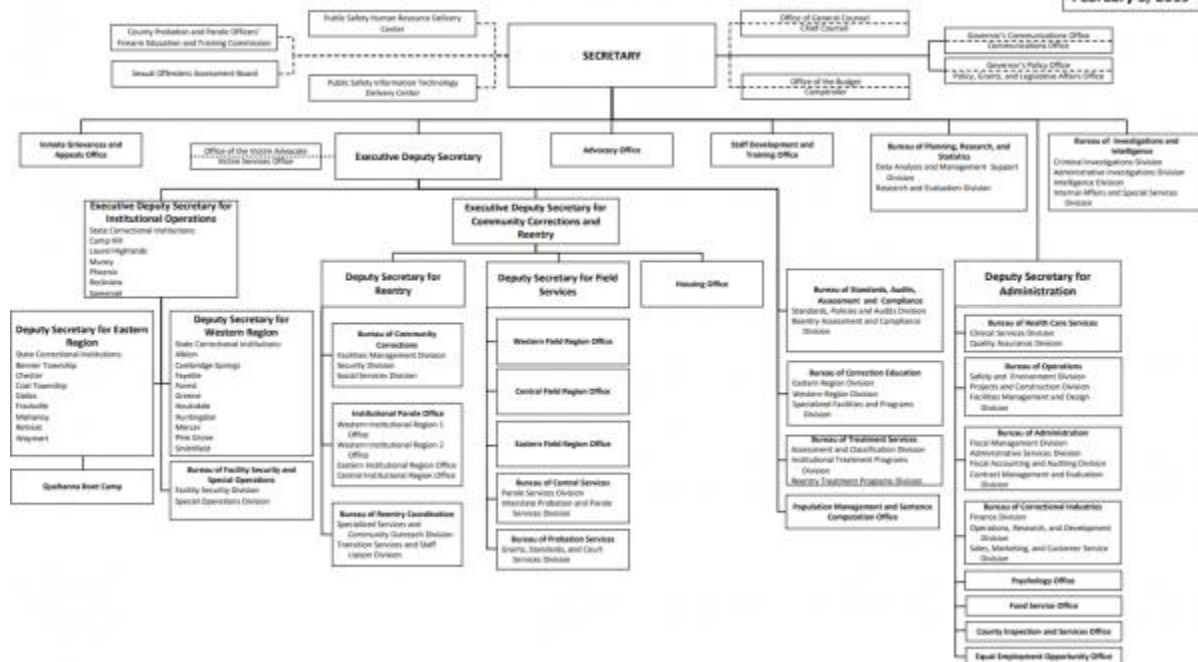




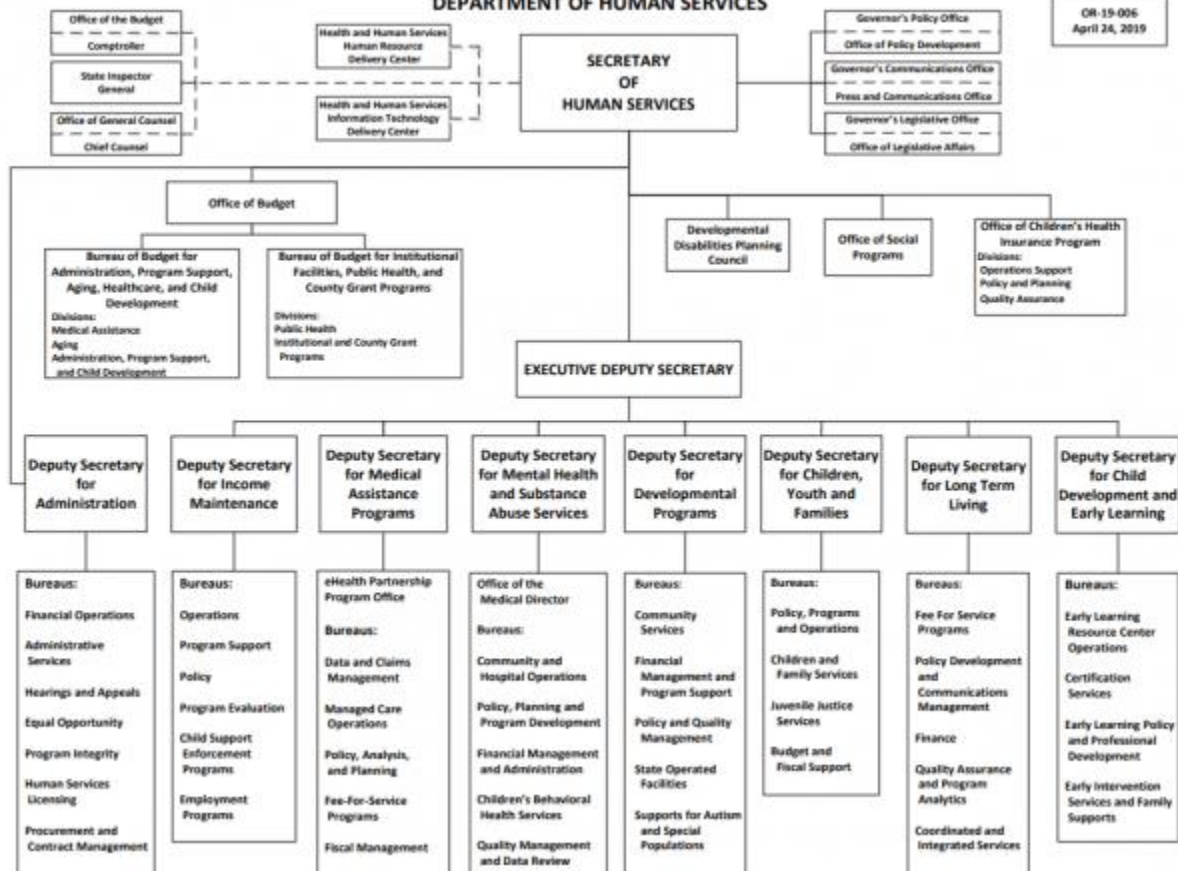
DEPARTMENT OF AGING

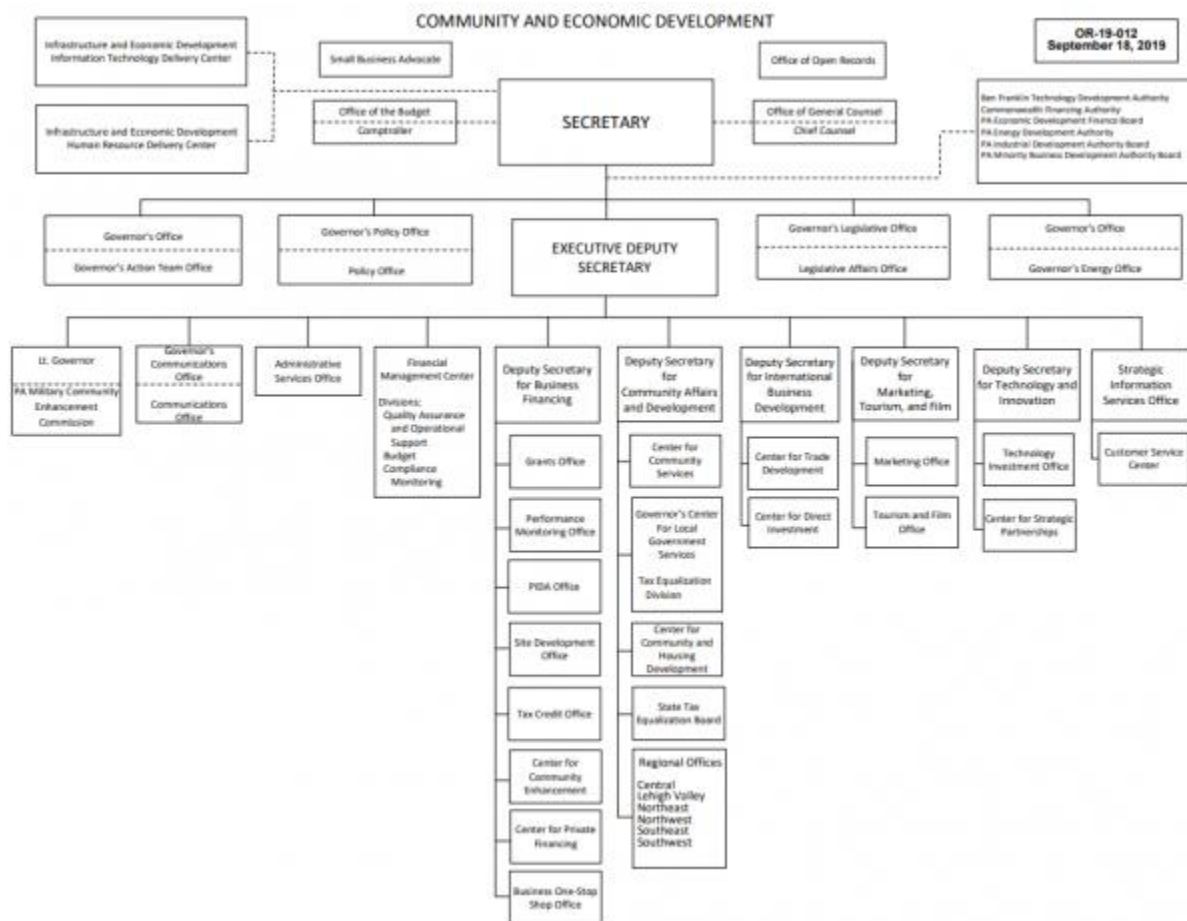


OR-19-001  
February 5, 2019



CR-19-006  
April 24, 2019





## B. STATE BOARD

Content is provided in the following sections.

### I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

#### Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board Members

Name	Title	Organization	Membership Category
Jeff Brown, Chair	President and CEO	Brown's Super Stores	Business
Tom Wolf	Governor	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	Governor
Idayat Adewunmi	President	Timi Pharmaceuticals	Business
Joseph J. Alex	President	Alex Color Company	Business
Denise Andahazy	VP and Chief HR Officer	CSS Industries	Business
Camera Bartolotta	Senator	Pennsylvania Senate	General Assembly
Tim Bean	CFO	Control Chief Corporation	Business
Jennifer Berrier	Secretary	PA Department of Labor and Industry	Lead State Official

Name	Title	Organization	Membership Category
Richard Bloomingdale	President	Pennsylvania AFL-CIO	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Brian Campbell	Owner	Brian Campbell Farms	Business
Julene Campion	VP Recruitment, Organization Development & Learning	Geisinger Health System	Business
Morgan Cephas	Representative	PA House of Representatives	General Assembly
Amanda Cappelletti	Senator	PA Senate	General Assembly
Wendie DiMatteo-Holsinger	CEO	ASK Foods Inc.	Business
Jessica Eberley	CEO	HRT Solutions	Business
Patrick Eiding	President	AFL-CIO Philadelphia Council	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend	President and CEO	Philadelphia Youth Network, Inc.	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Brian Funkhouser	President and CEO	Buchart Horn Inc./BASCO Associates	Business
Justin Genzlinger	CEO/Owner	Settlers Hospitality	Business
Nick Gilson	Founder and CEO	Gilson Snow, Inc.	Business
Eric Haggerty	Acting Secretary	PA Department of Education	Lead State Official
James Harper, Jr.	Business Manager	Laborers Local 413	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Robert J. Harvie, Jr.	Commissioner	Bucks County	Local Elected Official
Sarah Hollister	Deputy Director of Education Policy	City of Philadelphia, Mayor's Office of Education	Labor/CBO/ Youth/Ed
Ryan Hyde	Acting Executive Director	Office of Vocational Rehabilitation	Lead State Official
Gerardo Interiano	Vice President of Government Relations and Public Affairs	Aurora	Business
Allison Jones	Secretary of Policy and Planning	Office of Governor Tom Wolf	State Agency Official
Timothy James	Tech Lead/Manager	Google	Business

Name	Title	Organization	Membership Category
Marguerite Kline	HR Manager	Berks Heim Nursing & Rehabilitation	Business
Carrie Lenze	Global Continuous Improvement Director	Morgan Advanced Materials	Business
George Little	Acting Secretary	PA Department of Corrections	State Agency Official
Andrea MacArthur	Vice President, Talent	ERIE Insurance	Business
Ryan Mackenzie	Representative	PA House of Representatives	General Assembly
Bob McAuliffe	Director	United Steel Workers District 10	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Henry Nicholas	President	AFSCME Hospital and Health Care Employees	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Jodi Pace	Senior Human Resources Manager	AFP Advanced Food Products LLC	Business
Michael Pipe	Commissioner	Centre County	Chief Local Elected Official
Tom Redden	Business Agent	Steamfitters Local Union 420	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Russell Redding	Secretary	PA Department of Agriculture	State Agency Official
Gregg Riefenstahl	Manager- Recruiting and Selection	Penske	Business
Lisa Risboskin	Human Resources Manager	Ball Corporation	Business
Melissa Shusterman	President and CEO	Fedora Media	Business
Frank Sirianni	President	PA State Building Trades Council	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Meg Snead	Acting Secretary	PA Department of Human Services	State Agency Official
John "Ski" Sygielski	President	HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed
Robert Torres	Secretary	PA Department of Aging	State Agency Official
Jessica Trybus	Founder and Chief Games Officer	Simcoach Games	Business



Name	Title	Organization	Membership Category
Laura Wand	Formerly VP and General Manager, Applied HVAC Equipment	Formerly Johnson Controls International, PLC	Business
Yvette Watts	CEO	Watts Facility Solutions	Business
Neil Weaver	Acting Secretary	PA Department of Community and Economic Development	State Agency Official
Terry Wilttrout	President	Washington Health System Greene	Business
Matt Yarnell	President	SEIU Healthcare PA	Labor/CBO/Youth/Ed

In 2018, Pennsylvania expanded the Workforce Board membership to include several additional non-business members to ensure comprehensive representation of the state's workforce system partners. Due to recent retirements and resignations of members, Pennsylvania currently requires three additional business members on the Workforce Development Board to meet the majority business requirement. The Pennsylvania Governor's office is working to finalize these appointments and will have them in place prior to July 1, 2022. Current business representation includes small businesses, as defined by the U.S. Small Business Association.

Pennsylvania has representation from all other required categories, including:

- Both chambers of Pennsylvania's State Legislature
- Twenty percent representation from Pennsylvania's workforce.
- All required government officials, including lead state officials over the WOIA core programs, and chief local elected officials.

## II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

Members are given a thorough orientation of their roles and responsibilities, including Governor's Wolf's Strategic Vision for the workforce development system in the commonwealth. The Board meets quarterly to conduct business, including the deliberation and approval of recommendations developed by the Board's committees. As of the enacting of this plan the Board will continue to have five standing committees focusing on the Governor's goals, including (1) Career Pathways and Apprenticeship, (2) Industry Partnerships and Employer Engagement, (3) Youth, (4) Continuous Improvement, and (5) One-Stop Operation. Additionally, the Board has two ad-hoc committees; Healthcare and Reentry.

### 4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

## A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

The commonwealth will at a minimum produce the six common performance measures described in Section 116(b) on a quarterly basis for each of the core programs under Titles I, III, and IV. Outcomes will be compared to negotiated levels of performance for each measure. Participant-specific reports that provide the pool of people included in the six common performance measure(s) for Titles I, III, and IV will be compiled in conjunction with these quarterly reports and distributed to LWDBs in support of program management and analysis. Assessment of effectiveness measures are also being developed to allow the state and LWDBs to make better informed decisions about programming and the use of funds.

PA Department of Education (PDE) will establish agency performance outcome measures and targets for local programs. The agency performance measures will encompass those outcomes on which adult education and literacy activities have the greatest and most direct impact: educational functioning level gain, attainment of a high school equivalency credential, and transition to postsecondary education or training. In addition, the division will establish targets for employment in the second quarter after exit and median earnings in the second quarter after exit. In addition, Title II programs will be required to report on the number of outcomes per enrolled student. All core programs will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure progress toward meeting or exceeding state and local WIOA negotiated performance levels.

To better ensure local and regional workforce development areas are aligned with the WIOA combined state plan, Pennsylvania has offset the local and regional planning cycle by one year. For example, local and regional areas are – at the time of this document’s submission – using the WIOA Combined State Plan to make informed decisions about their PY 2021-2024 plans and subsequent modification. Doing so ensures local and regional alignment with statewide strategy, and the local and regional contextualization of performance standards.

## B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

The PA CareerLink® operator plays an instrumental role in assessing all one-stop partner programs. Beyond traditional program-specific performance metrics, the operator will consider how well all the one-stop partner programs coordinate and integrate service delivery, promote the seamless transition of customers from one partner to another, and demonstrate the capacity to meet the needs of customers accessing the PA CareerLink® system. Program-specific performance is addressed in the response to the effectiveness of programs in the preceding two-year period question that follows.

## C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The commonwealth has produced the six common performance measures described in Section 116(b) on a quarterly basis for each of the core programs under Title I, III, and IV. Staff in these programs have compared the outcomes to the negotiated performance levels for each of the measures and adjusted as necessary to develop a solid baseline for each of the measure. Quarterly reports were also distributed to LWDBs in support of program management and analysis. Solid collaboration between the state and the LWDBs revealed both opportunities to improve service delivery, while at the same time, ensuring a primary focus of serving those customers with the greatest barriers to employment. A solid system of sharing promising practices among the local delivery system is also evolving.

PA CareerLink® operators continually evaluate how well the partners coordinated and integrated service delivery, promote the seamless transition of customers from one partner to another, and demonstrate the capacity to meet the needs of customers. These operators assess the programs within their purview and are continually looking for opportunities to improve their local service delivery systems for maximum customer satisfaction.

Career Advisors within the 62 Pennsylvania CareerLink® offices provide services to job seekers through a variety of activities aimed at helping them find and/or retain employment leading to both family and life-sustaining wages. Pennsylvania's assessment strategy rests on the premise that, in order to provide better service to our customers, we must invest in the professional development of our Career Advisors. The initial step of that process was to assess the skills of the Career Advisors employed by the commonwealth. This examined the ability of 1,400 Career Advisors to respond to both the present and emerging needs of PA job seekers.

According to L&I staff, three conditions have become increasingly important in our current operations:

- Job seeker opportunities in some industries have been severely impacted by COVID 19; this presents both financial and mental health challenges for those seeking to enter or reenter the job market.
- Safety concerns and the broad spectrum of the technological capability to utilize an increasingly digital marketplace are significant barriers.
- The emotional/mental state of some unemployed job seekers has been exacerbated by the pandemic.

A vendor was chosen for this project and asked to provide a report that detailed:

1. What Knowledge, Skills and Abilities do PA CareerLink® Career Advisors currently possess?
2. What core essential skills are needed for Career Advisors when considering the current context for the work environment, COVID-19, technology access, and racial, equity, and inclusion top of mind for most customers and employers?
3. What skills do Career Advisors, and their organizations as well, need to become known and seen as proactive?
4. What training will be needed to close the gaps or to reinforce strengths?

After receiving the final report, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry is currently developing a training plan to address the recommendations contained in the report.

PDE's Division of Adult Education established agency performance outcome measures and targets for local Title II programs, which are designed to support Pennsylvania's attainment of its negotiated performance levels. The agency performance measures encompass those outcomes on which adult education and literacy activities have the greatest and most direct impact: educational functioning level gain, attainment of a high school equivalency credential, and transition to postsecondary education or training. In addition, the division established targets for employment in the second quarter after exit and median earnings in the second quarter after exit. Final agency performance outcomes are posted on the division's website. Over the course of the preceding two-year period, adult education and family literacy programs demonstrated flexibility and innovation to ensure continued services to their communities throughout the pandemic. They implemented a range of orientation, intake, and assessment procedures to allow students to participate either remotely or in person with health and safety

measures in place. Programs provided instruction and student support services using a range of technology-enhanced and in-person activities. Programs invested funds in technology and implemented lending programs to support students' access. Program staff helped students in their programs who are also parents of school-age children to navigate the challenges of remote learning. To support local program's work, PDE Division of Adult Education expanded the remote learning options under its distance learning policy, adopted the policies and procedures for remote administration of assessments that publishers introduced, and funded expanded technical assistance from the Distance Education Technical Assistance Project.

OVR, under Title IV, utilizes CWDS to capture information related to performance indicators for the VR program and to assess effectiveness of program activity on these indicators. The Systems and Evaluations Division within OVR regularly monitors this activity to compare expected levels of performance and negotiated levels of performance. All VR performance indicators have been trending upward over the past two-year period.

In 2020-21, 80 percent of all participants in adult education and family literacy program engaged in some distance learning. Those participants accounted for 92 percent of all attendance hours; they averaged 75 hours per participant versus 28 hours per participant for non-distance-learning participants. In terms of measurable skill gains (MSG), distance learning participants' MSG outcome was one full percentage point higher than the overall participant population. Based on the success of the remote learning and hybrid options introduced during this period, PDE Division of Adult Education will maintain the expanded options and increase its investment in professional development and technical assistance to programs in distance learning and digital literacy.

The Division of Adult Education conducted ongoing informal and formal monitoring, assessment, and evaluation of local programs through desk monitoring. Regional advisors kept track of agency progress toward the agency performance outcome measures and other key markers of performance, such as contracted enrollment, appropriate assessment, employment outcomes and student persistence, using a range of tools. When data showed areas for concern, advisors contacted the local program administrators to discuss the concerns and provide guidance and technical assistance. After the end of the program year, advisors contacted each agency individually to discuss its performance, focusing on areas in which the program has shown progress and areas in which it must improve.

#### D. EVALUATION

Pennsylvania will evaluate the workforce system based on its strategic plan and for the purpose of evaluating the return on investment and best practices of its programs. Here are some examples of our current evaluations:

**Accenture.** The Department contracted with *Accenture* to conduct an evaluation on the current state of customer engagement, the gaps present and strategies to improve the virtual services and the impact of customer digital literacy services offered by the PA CareerLink® system. The results of this evaluation have prompted Pennsylvania to create another procurement that will focus on implementation of the recommendations found in the evaluation's final report.

**Career Advisor Evaluation.** Began in program year 2020, the PA Department of Labor & Industry contracted with a vendor to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and abilities of its Career Advisors in the local service delivery system. The purpose of this engagement focuses on the department's strategic plan to improve service delivery in the PA CareerLink®. The strategy proposed that to provide better service to its customers, it must invest in the professional development of the Career Advisors. The initial step in the process was to assess the skills of the Career Advisors employed by the commonwealth. This assessment is measuring the extent to which the 250+ Career Advisors in the PA CareerLink® centers throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have the requisite skills to respond to both the present and emerging needs of PA job seekers. Upon completion of this evaluation, the Department will procure a vendor to initiate some or all the recommendations indicated in the final report.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Party Grant Evaluator / Digital Literacy and Workforce Evaluation Grant (DLWDG).** The Department is seeking services from a vendor to evaluate the efficacy and impact of the DLWDG.

The goal of this project is to evaluate the effectiveness and return on investment of the DLWDG to promote high-level performance with-in and high-level outcomes from the workforce development system. This will be accomplished through a review of each of the 32 Digital Literacy grant awards to determine if the grant was effective in addressing the digital literacy skills of the target population and to determine what additional needs remain to address for the coverage areas and unserved or underserved populations.

**Business Services.** Pennsylvania will conduct an evaluation of the delivery of services to the many employing in the commonwealth's workforce delivery system.

As the pandemic draws to a close, employers' ability to connect to the workforce that they need has been affected by new challenges. Now more than ever, it has become critically important to understand the role of the public workforce system and its stakeholders. PA CareerLink®, Local Workforce Development Board partners, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) subcontractors providing critical business services (e.g., Steel Valley Authority), L&I as a funder of industry partnerships, and the economic development services provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) through various programs all have important roles in the workforce development system. All these entities comprise the breadth of business support services throughout the commonwealth. A comprehensive evaluation of the business engagement services provided by the commonwealth and its sub-contractors will provide key insights into the supports that businesses of all sizes should be able to connect with and benefit from.

**Mobile Concepts.** Shortly after the implementation of WIOA, several LWDA's sought to make PA CareerLink® services more accessible, especially in rural areas where transportation to the established "brick and mortar" sites is unavailable. The Northwest LWDA was the first to pilot mobile service delivery. It posited that by implementing a mobile service delivery strategy, it could rely less on static sites and by doing so, save money allocated to building costs and put it back into service delivery. The LWDB also expected to serve more participants, leading to better performance.

To determine the effectiveness of this service strategy, in program year 2019, L&I's Bureau of Workforce Development Administration contracted with Jobs for the Future (JFF) to conduct an independent evaluation of the Northwest LWDA's service delivery system, including evaluating the difference in performance between its current mobile service delivery strategy versus its pre-mobile service performance. This evaluation was meant to determine both the successes and challenges Northwest encountered being the first to attempt the mobile service concept in the hope to share promising practices with the Commonwealth's other LWDA's.

The JFF evaluation was cut short because of the global pandemic; however, L&I staff used the results of the work that had been completed to develop a new evaluation of this area now that one-stop centers in this local area have reopened. This new evaluation will serve three (3) primary purposes: 1) determine both the successes and challenges Northwest encountered being the first to attempt the mobile service concept; 2) serve as a plan by which other local areas will be evaluated contemplating similar activities; and 3) share aspects of the effective methodologies used to support similar models in other areas.

## 5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

### A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

#### I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

##### **Allocation of WIOA Adult and Youth Funds to Local Areas:**

The three-part formula for allocating WIOA Adult and Youth funds to Local Areas is as follows:

##### Step 1

The process begins by determining the average number of individuals in the civilian labor force and unemployed for the most recent twelve-month reference period of July 1st through June 30th, by Local Area.

Once these numbers are calculated, the areas of substantial unemployment (ASU) are identified. By definition, an ASU is a contiguous area with a population of at least 10,000 individuals and an unemployment rate of at least 6.5 percent.

For Local Areas that have unemployment of 6.5 percent or greater, the civilian labor force and unemployment data is inserted directly into the allocation formula. For Local Areas that have unemployment less than 6.5 percent, an ASU search is performed. For reference, the ASU search process, as described below, is completed through a joint working venture between L&I's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) and the Bureau of Workforce Development Administration (BWDA).

An ASU search is a procedure developed by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics to identify ASUs. County-level unemployment data, along with either Census tract or municipal level unemployment data from the most recent Census, is used to determine the current unemployment rates for cities, townships, or Census tracts. Through this procedure, which can utilize a subtraction or addition method, cities, townships, or Census tracts that border each other are joined together until the definition of an ASU is achieved. A Local Area can have more than one ASU within their geographic border, if the building method is used.

Once the ASU(s) is designated, the civilian labor force and unemployed totals for each Local Area's ASU are then inserted into the computer-based allocation formula.

### Step 2

The first third of funds is allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed in ASUs compared to the statewide total of such individuals (as determined in Step 1). The percentage share of funds is determined by dividing the number of unemployed in each Local Area with unemployment of 6.5 percent or greater, by the statewide total of unemployed in areas with unemployment of 6.5 percent or greater. The resulting percentage is then multiplied by one-third of the State's local area portion of the allocation.

### Step 3

The next third of funds is allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in each Local Area compared to the total number of such individuals in the State. As required by WIOA the "higher of" either the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in the Local Area; **or** the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in areas of substantial unemployment in the Local Area is calculated.

The excess number of unemployed over 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force is then totaled for the State. This statewide total is then divided into the number of excess unemployed in each Local Area to determine each Local Area's percentage share of funds. This percentage is then multiplied by one-third of the State's local area portion of the allocation.

### Step 4

The final third of funds is allocated based on the number of economically disadvantaged individuals in each Local Area compared to the statewide total of such individuals. The number of economically disadvantaged individuals is derived from the most recent federal Census. Economically disadvantaged youth (age 16-21) and economically disadvantaged adults (age 22-72) are used for each respective funding stream.

Using federal Census data, the percentage share is determined by dividing the number of economically disadvantaged for each Local Area by the statewide economically disadvantaged total. The resulting percentage for each Local Area is then multiplied by the final one-third of funds. The amount of funds for each third of the formula is then totaled for each Local Area.

### Step 5

Note that prior to the minimum allocation percentage, commonly known as "hold-harmless" provision, being applied, the total amount determined in the prior steps would be each Local Area's allocation. Briefly, the hold-harmless provision ensures that a Local Area will not be allocated funds that are less than 90 percent of their average allocation percentage for the prior two years. Utilization of this authority, combined with WIOA's requirement that a hold-harmless

percentage be applied, means that Local Area's allocations will continue to include the critical hold-harmless provision. The utilization of the hold-harmless provision will stabilize Local Area funding and minimize service disruptions.

The next step is then to apply the hold-harmless provision to the allocations. This is done by first combining each Local Area's allocation, excluding transfers, restorations, or unexpended funds, for the previous two years. The Local Area's two-year combined allocation is then divided by the statewide two-year combined allocation to determine the relative share percentage of funds that each Local Area received for the two reference years.

Ninety percent of the relative share percentage is then calculated to establish the minimum percentage share that each Local Area must receive in the formula allocation process.

#### Step 6

Using the base allocations determined in steps 2, 3 and 4, each Local Area's percentage share of funds is calculated by dividing each Local Area's allocation amount by the statewide total.

#### Step 7

This step calculates the minimum dollar amount of funds each Local Area is to receive based on the hold-harmless provision. This is determined by multiplying the 90 percent relative share percentage determined in Step 5, by the State's local area portion of the allocation. The resulting figure establishes the minimum amount of funds that each Local Area will receive under the formula allocation process.

#### Step 8

Local Areas with a relative share percentage that is less than the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage are identified by comparing the percentage share determined in Step 6, to the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage determined in Step 5.

The funds needed to bring the Local Areas with percentages below the mandated minimum into compliance comes from the Local Areas who have a percentage share of funds which is above the mandated minimum percentage. Funds are subtracted, on a prorated basis, from the Local Areas that exceed the minimum percentage to bring the other Local Areas that are below the minimum percentage into compliance with the hold-harmless provision.

The Local Area allocations and relative share percentages are then recalculated to determine whether each Local Area received the 90 percent minimum allocation percentage.

This step is repeated as many times as is necessary to comply with the minimum allocation percentage provision within 2 decimal points. Compliance with this provision completes the formula allocation process.



Additionally, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Development Funding (YDF) is allocated to LWDAs by the PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I). L&I currently utilizes TANF caseload numbers (broken down by county), provided each year by the PA Department of Human Services (DHS), to determine the percentage of TANF YDF that will be distributed to each local area.

## II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

All content for section III. b. 5. A. ii. is provided in section III. b. 5. A. i.

## III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

The following factors will be utilized when allocating Dislocated Worker funds to Local Areas:

FACTOR	DATA SOURCE	PERCENTAGE WEIGHT
Insured Unemployed	Continued Unemployment Compensation Claims	10%
Unemployment Concentrations	Number of Unemployed Over 4.5%	20%
Plant Closing and Mass Layoff	# of Workers affected by WARN notices (CWDS).	15%
Declining Industries	Employment in Industries Projected to Lose 10% of Employment Between 2012-2022	10%
Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship	Employment Levels in the Agriculture Industry based upon American Community Survey (US Census Bureau)	5%
Long-Term Unemployment	Number of Claimants Exhausting Unemployment Compensation Benefits	17%
Dislocated Worker [State added factor]	Estimated Number of Dislocated Workers	23%

The data used to calculate the Dislocated Worker Local Area allocations is provided by the L&I's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA).

County-level data for the most recent 12-month program year is entered into the computerized formula.

In order to provide a balanced distribution of funds, one-half of the funds are allocated on a relative share percentage basis and one-half on a proportional basis. Specifically, the insured unemployment, unemployment concentrations, and plant closings and mass lay-off factors are calculated on a relative share percentage basis. For example, the number of insured unemployed for the Local Area is divided by the statewide number of insured unemployed to determine the relative share percentage for that factor. Conversely, the declining industries, farmer rancher, long-term unemployment, and Dislocated Worker factors are calculated on a proportional percentage basis of each Local Area's civilian labor force. For example, the number of Dislocated Workers for the Local Area is divided by the civilian labor force for that Local Area to determine the percentage of Dislocated Workers in proportion to that area's civilian labor force.

Using the Local Area data, the computerized formula calculates the Local Area's relative or proportional percentage share for each factor. For the relative factors, the percentage share for each Local Area is first multiplied by the percentage weight assigned to each factor and then by the local area portion of the state's Dislocated Worker allocation figure to determine the dollar amount for each relative factor. For the proportional factors, the percentage share for each Local Area is totaled. The resulting percentage is then divided into each Local Area's proportional percentage share and then multiplied by the percentage weight assigned to each factor and then the statewide allocation to determine the Local Area dollar amount for each factor. The Local Area's allocation amount for each factor is then added together to determine the Local Area's total Dislocated Worker allocation.

Note that prior to the minimum allocation percentage, commonly known as "hold-harmless" provision, being applied, the total amount determined in the prior steps would be each Local Area's allocation.

The hold-harmless provision ensures that a Local Area will not be allocated funds that are less than 90 percent of their average allocation percentage for the prior two years. Utilization of this authority, combined with WIOA's requirement that a hold-harmless percentage be applied, means that Local Area's allocations will continue to include the critical hold-harmless provision. The utilization of the hold-harmless provision will stabilize Local Area funding and minimize service disruptions.

The next step is then to apply the hold-harmless provision to the allocations. This is done by first combining each Local Area's allocation, excluding transfers, restorations, or unexpended funds, for the previous two years. The Local Area's two-year combined allocation is then divided by the statewide two-year combined allocation to determine the relative share percentage of funds that each Local Area received for the two reference years.

Ninety percent of the relative share percentage is then calculated to establish the minimum percentage share that each Local Area must receive in the formula allocation process.

Using the base allocations, each Local Area's percentage share of funds is calculated by dividing each Local Area's allocation amount by the statewide total. This step calculates the minimum dollar amount of funds each Local Area is to receive based on the hold-harmless provision. This

is determined by multiplying the 90 percent relative share percentage by the State's local area portion of the allocation. The resulting figure establishes the minimum amount of funds that each Local Area will receive under the formula allocation process. Local Areas with a relative share percentage that is less than the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage are identified by comparing the percentage share to the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage previously determined. The funds needed to bring the Local Areas with percentages below the mandated minimum into compliance comes from the Local Areas who have a percentage share of funds which is above the mandated minimum percentage. Funds are subtracted, on a prorated basis, from the Local Areas that exceed the minimum percentage to bring the other Local Areas that are below the minimum percentage into compliance with the hold-harmless provision. The Local Area allocations and relative share percentages are then recalculated to determine whether each Local Area received the 90 percent minimum allocation percentage. This process is repeated as many times as is necessary to comply with the minimum allocation percentage provision within 2 decimal points. Compliance with this provision completes the formula allocation process.

## B. FOR TITLE II

### I. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL AWARD MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS TO ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING HOW ELIGIBLE AGENCIES WILL ESTABLISH THAT ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS ARE ORGANIZATIONS OF DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS

Section 231 Adult Basic Education Direct Service grants that were awarded through PDE's first competition under WIOA are in effect through June 30, 2022. The PDE Division of Adult Education will conduct a full and open competition for the next multi-year grant cycle for Title II Section 231 and 225 funds in early 2022 for grants to be awarded July 1, 2022.

For the competition, PDE will use a needs-based funding formula to allocate funds to the local workforce development areas. The formula includes six data sets weighted equally: 1) the number of individuals age 18 and over who are not enrolled in school and who do not have a high school diploma; 2) the number of individuals age 16 and over who are in the labor force and are unemployed; 3) the number of individuals age 18 and over with less than a ninth grade education; 4) the number of people below poverty level; 5) the number of OJT openings per year; and 6) the land area in square miles of the local workforce areas. In local areas comprised of multiple counties, PDE will further break out funding by county to ensure services are available throughout the area.

As part of the grant application process, all applicants will be required to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the application be reviewed and considered for funding. To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants that have been funded under Title II AEFLA, as amended by WIOA, and/or state matching funds through PDE Division of Adult Education in the three program years immediately preceding the competition will be required to provide performance data under WIOA section 116 from those years. Applicants that were not previously funded by the Division of Adult Education under Title II AEFLA, as amended by WIOA will be required to provide performance data that show their past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving outcomes in comparable measures. For both groups, these measures include effectiveness in helping students develop their academic skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition, achieve high school equivalency, and transition into employment and/or postsecondary education/training. Eligible providers will be required to demonstrate clear

alignment of proposed activities and services to the strategies and goals of the local workforce development plans for the areas to be served.

Through a standardized process developed by PDE Division of Adult Education, local workforce development boards will review applications for alignment with the local plan. Eligible providers will submit their applications to PDE Division of Adult Education through the eGrants system. Once the review of applicant eligibility is completed, the division will distribute the eligible applications to the appropriate local workforce boards for review. The division will establish a timeline for the review process and provide a review/scoring rubric to all local boards, which will include a section in which local boards can provide recommendations to improve alignment of proposed Title II services with the local plans. PDE will take the recommendations and results of the review into consideration when making decisions regarding grant awards and conditions.

## II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS

PDE has policies, procedures, and guidelines in place to ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equal access to apply and compete for funds. The notice of availability of funds is first published through the Pennsylvania Bulletin, the commonwealth's official gazette for information and rulemaking. Once the notice is published, all grant information is posted to the PDE website on the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage, which is accessible to the public. The division creates a grant competition information video with closed captions, which is available to the public on YouTube. Policies established by PDE's Communications Office ensure the accessibility of all grant-related documents that are posted to the website. PDE will conduct the grant competition through its eGrants system. Through this system all eligible providers have access to the same grant application for each project being competed. A PDF of the content of the grant, including the content of Help Buttons, is posted on the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage, so that all interested parties can review it prior to accessing eGrants.

In accordance with PDE grant guidelines, grant applications will be evaluated by teams of at least three individuals. Team members will include staff from the Division of Adult Education, other PDE staff, other qualified commonwealth staff, and, as needed, peer reviewers, subject matter experts, and/or consultants. Division staff will create a scoring rubric for each grant type, which will address all items in the grant application. Review team members will be trained prior to beginning evaluation and scoring of applications. Once the applications have been reviewed and scored, they will be ranked from highest to lowest scoring. PDE will award grants to the highest scoring applicant in each of the local workforce development areas and will continue to award funds until the amount allocated to the area under the needs-based formula is reached or until all applications for service in the local area with a sufficient score have been funded. PDE Division of Adult Education will consider the results of the local board reviews with recommendations during the awarding process.

Section 243 Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) grants are competed separately from section 231. PDE Division of Adult Education held a full and open competition in early 2020 for an IELCE grant cycle of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023. The content of the grant applications addressed the purposes of the section as well as the seven requirements and thirteen considerations identified in the Act. The processes to ensure direct and equitable

access and the same grant announcement and application procedures for all eligible providers are the same as those for the section 231/225 competition. Funds were not allocated to specific areas. Rather, applicants provided evidence of the need and support for the proposed IELCE program. As with the section 231 grants, section 243 grants funds are awarded through annual funding notifications contingent on the availability of federal funds. Each year's grant amount and conditions are based on the following criteria: contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services; evidence of sufficient progress in meeting the targets proposed in the grant application and finalized through negotiation with PDE; evidence of continuous program improvement; compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and the amount of the federal award.

For the purposes of establishing that eligible providers were organizations of demonstrated effectiveness, PDE required applicants to provide performance data on their records of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy; and information regarding their outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training. Applicants previously funded under Title II of WIOA submitted performance data required under section 116 of WIOA. Applicants that had not been previously funded under Title II of WIOA provided performance data to demonstrate past effectiveness. PDE required applicants to provide quantitative data for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, with an emphasis on data and outcomes pertaining to English language learners.

#### C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

PA Department of Labor & Industry Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is a combined agency and consists of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) and Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS). Funds are distributed based on historical spending patterns of specific regions covered by offices. OVR also maintains a reserve fund in case offices experience an increase in demand for services and funds are redistributed as necessary so that no one single office ever runs out of funds if other offices have remaining funds.

### 6. PROGRAM DATA

#### A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) serves as the primary database and system-of-record for tracking and recording services, activities, and outcomes for workforce development programs funded under Titles I, III, and IV, in accordance with WIOA section 116. The CWDS also tracks and record services, activities, and outcomes for the Trade program. In addition, the CWDS is designed to integrate the recording of services for Titles I, III and Trade to ensure the tracking and reporting of common program participation cycles. Title II uses the e-Data v2 web-based system to collect program data for federal and state reporting purposes.

In an effort to integrate data across agencies, the commonwealth has executed a historic multi-agency data sharing agreement that allows flexibility in the exchange of data necessary for, among other uses, federal reporting, performance metrics tracking and enhanced service to shared customers.

The Pennsylvania Departments of Labor & Industry and Human Services have also executed a data sharing agreement that will allow for the identification of workforce program participants who have also received services available through the Pennsylvania Department of Human

Services. The data sharing agreement is currently being operationalized and will result in a more efficient path to analyze the level of co-enrollment between the two departments.

The Pennsylvania Departments of Labor and Industry and Community and Economic Development have created an interface between their systems to allow the sharing of business services data. Business service representatives from each agency have access to their counterpart's business engagement history and case notes to reduce employer/business fatigue, eliminate duplication of efforts, and work collaboratively, when possible, to better serve our business customer.

The Commonwealth hired a project manager for and is in the process of building a Statewide Longitudinal Data system that will link data across systems of record in several areas including early learning, K-12 education, postsecondary education, and workforce development, and ideally to additional data sets and systems that provide detailed demographic data on individuals in these programs, and to wage record data. This system will allow for evaluation of program effectiveness at a level not previously achievable in Pennsylvania and will provide data to support policy development and funding decisions.

The Commonwealth has previously conducted various surveys, interviews and evaluations designed to elicit information to inform process improvement efforts. One such evaluation around human-centered design painted our customers' experience as splintered, siloed, confusing and in some instances, disconnected. Since then, the Commonwealth has prioritized using technology to streamline intake and service delivery.

The Commonwealth workforce partners (Workforce, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Human Services) along with the Commonwealth's Office of Equal Opportunity have been designing a digital intake form to replace paper forms that are currently used to gather information from and triage new customers in our workforce delivery system. This digital process will ensure consistency throughout the Commonwealth and connect to our system of record. Questions have been added to the form to identify digital literacy barrier information and accessibility issues so that they may be addressed and remediated early in the customer journey. This will ensure equity in that all jobseekers are adequately prepared to participate in virtual service delivery and engage with employers in the new era of remote work and learning.

The intake form and process were designed so that individuals have the opportunity to update personal and barrier information every time they engage with the workforce system, ensuring that we have the most accurate and current information to better serve our customers.

It is anticipated that collecting and tracking this data will foster stronger relationships with our additional partners and lead to additional referrals.

The Commonwealth is committed to using technology to create an easily accessible, streamlined workforce delivery system.

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (WDB) is focused on developing policy recommendations to assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across one-

stop partner programs. The Continuous Improvement Committee of the WDB has been coordinating the Keystone Workforce and Economic Development Command Center and Pennsylvania's Office of Performance Through Excellence to develop a dashboard displaying key performance indicators of Pennsylvania Workforce Development System.

The WDB continues to research best practices to develop recommendations related to credentialing guidance, barrier identification, career pathways system development, reentry services, and services to opportunity youth. The WDB will continue to explore all workforce development operations system wide to identify where improvements can be made, and inefficiencies can be eliminated.

The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) serves as the primary database and system-of-record for tracking and recording services, activities, and outcomes for workforce development programs funded under Titles I, III, and IV, in accordance with WIOA section 116. In addition, the CWDS is designed to integrate the recording of services for Titles I and III to ensure the tracking and reporting of common program participation cycles. Title II uses the e-Data v2 web-based system to collect program data for federal and state reporting purposes.

Staff from the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis are responsible for coordinating production of the reports for Titles I and III, while staff from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation ensure the production of reports for Title IV. This work is accomplished by establishing detailed mapping of how system data aligns with the PIRL and RSA-911 data element definitions. Staff from the Office of Information Technology utilize this mapping to create the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) and the RSA-911. Wage and employment outcomes are added from a data match the unemployment compensation wage records. Currently, over 90 percent of all PIRL and RSA-911 elements are being reported.

OVR is working closely with the Office of Administration, Office of Information Technology to correct ongoing issues with CWDS reporting to ensure that data is being captured correctly, thus reporting accurately the RSA-911. Progress is being reported in multiple data elements being tracked and OVR will continue to participate in ongoing quality assurance testing. Specific examples include the validation and removal of duplicate and/or inaccurate Unique Identifiers for Students with Disabilities receiving Pre-employment Transition Services. All inaccuracies are being investigated and prompt resolutions are being implemented.

All of the data elements required for reporting under Section 116 for Title II are collected through PDE's eData system. Local adult education programs must use the division-created intake form to collect student data to ensure all data elements are collected completely and accurately. In addition, local programs report on expenditures for career services, training services, and contributions to one-stop infrastructure costs in annual final expenditure reports. Division of Adult Education staff work with a contractor to analyze the data and produce the required aggregate statistical reports following the guidance in the NRS Technical Assistance (TA) Guide. PDE does data matching with L&I for employment outcomes and co-enrollment numbers. Under its contracts with the National Student Clearinghouse and DiplomaSender, PDE is able to conduct data matching to identify participants who have enrolled in postsecondary education or training and those who have earned a Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma, Pennsylvania's high school equivalency credential. In addition to the statistical reports, PDE, Division of Adult Education submits an annual narrative report as required by USD OE, Office of

Career, Technical, and Adult Education. All required reports have been submitted on time and have been approved with little or no correction necessary.

Annually, PDE, Division of Adult Education establishes agency performance outcome measures and targets for local programs, which are designed to support Pennsylvania's attainment of its negotiated performance levels. The agency performance measures encompass those outcomes on which adult education and literacy activities have the greatest and most direct impact: educational functioning level gain, attainment of a high school equivalency credential, and transition to postsecondary education or training. In addition, the division establish targets for employment in the second quarter after exit and median earnings in the second quarter after exit. Final agency performance outcomes are posted on the division's website.

#### B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

The commonwealth currently has a data system which incorporates all PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) workforce program data, Unemployment Compensation (UC) wage record data, and TANF and SNAP participant data from the PA Department of Human Services. The proposed plan is to incorporate Adult and Basic Literacy Education and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation data as well. In addition, the PA Department of Education (PDE) is working to integrate its current pre-k through grade 12 statewide longitudinal student level data into the system and develop more robust postsecondary data.

PDE, Division of Adult Education conducts data matches to determine post-exit outcomes for participants, including employment, credential completion, and postsecondary enrollment outcomes. Data matches are conducted with L&I UC, National Student Clearinghouse, and HSE credential records.

OVR is exploring the feasibility of resourcing a combination of multiple potential strategies to assess participants' post-program success. One strategy is to develop a staff capacity for post closure customer outreach by conducting a Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis. A second strategy is to expand, revise, validate, and obtain legal clearances for existing post closure data through post-closure surveys and customer submitted data on case closure forms (form design alternatives analysis). And thirdly, by incorporating existing external databases (National Student Clearinghouse) for automated post-closure data (Needs Assessment, Gap Analysis and Proof of Concept Efforts).

The Commonwealth has hired a project manager to lead the transition to a true Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), linking the data elements outlined in the paragraph above into a secure environment, allowing assessment of educational and workforce initiatives over time. As additional data sets are identified over time, they will be incorporated into the SLDS to ensure continuous improvement of the system.

#### C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Pennsylvania will continue to use Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data for performance accountability and evaluations under WIOA. Pennsylvania will match WIOA participants covered under the common measures to UI wage record data in accordance with the timeframes and participant cohorts outlined in the common measures guidelines. In addition, UI wage records are routinely used for general labor market analysis and labor market information that informs policy in the commonwealth. UI wage record data are also utilized to



conduct studies on postsecondary education graduates as well as other populations upon request. Past studies include outcomes related to specific training programs within the WIOA system, and future studies will include an analysis of UI exhaustees. Pennsylvania will continue to use UI Wage record data in accordance with all applicable Federal and State laws.

#### D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

CWDS is a role-based system with specific permissions granted depending on an individual's role; confidential information is protected within the system. Access to CWDS by commonwealth employees and staff of partner organizations requires the completion of a *CWDS User Agreement and Access* form. The agreement outlines the policy for the disclosure of confidential data and information maintained in CWDS. The form authorizes staff access to the integrated database system and its information, which is processed, stored in, maintained on, and transmitted through CWDS for the commonwealth.

The eData system used by Title II is located within a web portal called MyPDESuite. MyPDESuite is a web portal that enables users to access various PDE data collection applications. To access MyPDESuite, users must register a Keystone Login username/password and use those credentials to login to MyPDESuite.- Users are granted access to applications within MyPDESuite by a security administrator at their education agency/institution. The security administrator is responsible for adding and removing users on behalf of their agency/institution. The website is SSL certified.

#### 7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

Veterans and eligible spouses are given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under a qualified job training program. Priority of Service establishes that veterans and eligible spouses are entitled to precedence over non-covered persons for services. A veteran or an eligible spouse either receives access to a service earlier in time than a non-covered person or, if the resource is limited, the veteran or eligible spouse receives access to the service instead of or before the non-covered person. The term "veteran" means a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Active service includes full-time Federal service in the National Guard or a Reserve component. This definition of "active service" does not include full-time duty performed strictly for training purposes."

In addition to normal priority of service the state also provides Individualized Career Services under the Jobs for Veteran State Grant (JMSG) to eligible veterans, veterans spouses, and caregivers as identified in VPL 03-14, VPL 03-14 Change 1, VPL 03-14 Change 2, and VPL 03-19. These populations include the following:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as defined at 38 USC 4211 (1) and (3); Special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
- who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or,
- were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- A homeless veteran, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a));

- A recently separated service member, as defined at 38 USC 4211 (6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;
- An offender, as defined in the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 3(38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;
- A veteran who lacks a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- A low-income veteran, as defined in WIOA Section 3(36)(A)
- A Veteran aged 18-24
- A Vietnam-era Veteran as identified by 38 U.S.C. 4211
- An Eligible Transitioning Service Member, Spouse, or Caregiver as described in VPL 07-14
- Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of intensive services (now referred to as Individualized Career Services);
- Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities (MTF) or warrior transition units (WTU); and
- The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured members

“Eligible spouse” as defined at section 2(a) of the JVA (38 U.S.C. 4215[a]) means the spouse of any of the following:

- a. Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
- b. Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:
  - i. Missing in action;
  - ii. Captured in line of duty by a hostile force; or
  - iii. Forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power;
- c. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
- d. Any veteran who died while a disability was in existence. A spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member (i.e., categories b. or c. above) would lose his or her eligibility if the veteran or service member were to lose the status that is the basis for the eligibility (e.g. if a veteran with a total service-connected disability were to receive a revised disability rating at a lower level). Similarly, for a spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member, that eligibility would be lost upon divorce from the veteran or service member.

The application of priority of service varies by program depending on the eligibility requirements of the program. Qualified job training programs include universal access programs and programs that require prospective participants to meet specified eligibility criteria. To qualify for eligibility-based programs, veterans must meet the criteria for that program before their veteran’s Priority of Service can be applied.

When a customer appears for PA CareerLink® services, the receptionist determines if the customer is a veteran and eligible for priority of service. If the customer self-discloses veteran status,

the veteran is assessed for eligibility to receive specialized Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funded staff services. This assessment allows the veteran customer to disclose whether he/she possesses significant barriers to employment, including lacking a high school diploma, transitional service member, or otherwise qualifies to receive intensive case management services from a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist, if present.

Upon determining that a veteran qualifies for intensive case management services from a DVOP Specialist based upon self-disclosed veteran status and the completed intake assessment, a referral to the DVOP Specialist can then be made, if available. If the DVOP Specialist cannot see the veteran immediately, the receptionist gives the veteran the choice of making an appointment with the DVOP Specialist or exercising priority of service.

If the veteran exercises the latter (i.e., will go to the front of the line for assistance and case management services). If a PA CareerLink® office does not have a DVOP Specialist, then priority of service automatically occurs and the veteran will see the next available PA CareerLink® staff member.

Upon meeting the veteran for the first time, the DVOP Specialist or PA CareerLink® staff member will ensure that the veteran's CWDS record contains the appropriate veteran service code and that the veteran is otherwise eligible for DVOP Specialist services. Thereafter, the DVOP Specialist will provide the necessary intensive case management services to assist with removing those barriers that inhibit full employment.

Priority of service also comes into play with respect to eligible veterans who seek to enter workforce programs such as On-the-Job Training or Occupational Skills training via an Individual Training Account. In these instances, the veteran receives the next available training slot. Additionally, qualified veterans receive priority of service for open job postings and job development opportunities with hiring employers. When employers conduct candidate searches, PA CareerLink® Online places a United States flag adjacent to a veteran's name.

#### **8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

The commonwealth's Non-Discrimination Plan, or NDP, provides written assurance that the state complies with all non-discrimination and equal opportunity requirements provided for in federal and state law and regulations. The NDP describes the actions and policies the state takes to ensure compliance. L&I's Office of Equal Opportunity, or OEO, is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, and other relevant laws and regulations.

The commonwealth's Workforce Delivery System PA CareerLink® Certification and Continuous Improvement Policy, WSP 121-05 outlines criteria for certification and re-certification of its PA

CareerLink® offices including physical and programmatic accessibility. Additionally, L&I's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, or OVR, assists OEO with the evaluation of each PA CareerLink® site annually to ensure compliance with ADA standards and 29 CFR 38.51. OVR offers OEO the expertise of Business Service staff to evaluate the physical accessibility and information technology accessibility of these sites to ensure Pennsylvanians with a disability can fully avail themselves of PA CareerLink® services.

PA CareerLink® centers will be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. The commonwealth mandates that all PA CareerLink® service locations provide reasonable accommodations, reasonable modifications, architectural accessibility, programmatic accessibility, and website accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Each office is equipped with assistive technologies and accessibility features; staff members are trained on the maintenance and operation of available assistive technology devices.

PA CareerLink® centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal, and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users; providing necessary accommodations and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants.

To support service to individuals with limited English proficiency, PA CareerLink® Online can be used in English or Spanish and uses translation services to allow the site to be viewed in multiple languages. Based on local need, PA CareerLink® offices may employ bilingual staff to assist customers.

PA CareerLink® Online offers a variety of resources and information on services available to individuals with disabilities including: information on training opportunities and links to online training; technology guides for using screen enlargement software, screen reading software, Windows Accessibility features and the Text Telephone or Teletypewriter for individuals who deaf or hard of hearing; information on the ADA and accessibility; alternate format handbooks; links to service providers and resources to assist persons with disabilities in removing barriers to employment; and links to information for employers interested in hiring a person with a disability including tax benefits, the ADA and accommodations.

Program partner staff and other individuals assigned to PA CareerLink® service locations receive training on disability awareness, sensitivity and etiquette, outreach for employers and guidance concerning Social Security and related topics. To further promote programmatic accessibility, OVR developed a comprehensive disability awareness and etiquette training that is delivered across the commonwealth to interested PA CareerLink® partners and businesses. OVR has also made available to all commonwealth employees an "Introduction to OVR" training to inform staff about the services OVR can offer to individuals with disabilities.

The PA Department of Education's Division of Adult Education requires all WIOA Title II programs to be ADA compliant and mandates that programs have reasonable materials available for students to use to accommodate learning differences. The Division of Adult

Education supports various professional development activities on providing services to address learning differences.

#### 9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The One-Stop Delivery System in Pennsylvania (PA CareerLink®) provides an array of employment and educational services to customers. To ensure that English Language Learners (ELLs) have access to services, all PA CareerLink® offices are equipped with Language Line capabilities as a “baseline” to ensure that communication between program experts and customers can occur seamlessly. Language line services provides interpreters to the customer/staff members (either by phone or in person) that allows access to services for ELLs. There is also a partnership with Unemployment Insurance partners to have interpreters in offices where there is a high concentration of ELLs that can facilitate dialogue between the customer and the call centers.

For individualized services, the PA CareerLink® has bilingual case managers in offices with a high concentration of Spanish-speaking customers (case managers use language line for other languages during case management). This allows for the intake process and eligibility of programs under WIOA to be explained clearly to customers who need reemployment services. Further, the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) is also available in Spanish to facilitate the information available for training programs, job orders, job fairs, and workshops. Hence, ELL customers have access to reemployment services online and physical access points. The Operator also works with the PA CareerLink® Administrator and partner leadership to review on a yearly basis local policy on cultural diversity and accessibility of services for all barrier populations.

The L&I Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) is the department’s Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Coordinator. OEO reviews each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) annually for compliance with WIOA 188 requirements regarding Limited English Proficiency plans as identified in 29 CFR Part § 38.4 §38.9, §38.40, §38.54. LWDAs must submit their current LEP plan to OEO for review, including documenting changes, updates and LWDB approval. OEO reviews documentation of the following:

- Common languages spoken in the LWDA service area and the availability of required translated documents
- Records including maintaining need for translators in individual files
- Including Babel notices in documents and electronic mediums (websites, applications, emails)
- Staff and provider training on LEP and access to language resources

OEO is a strong advocate for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) and Affirmative Outreach efforts statewide and in local one-stop delivery systems. OEO staff provides coaching and training to state, local and community agencies on many aspects of these topic areas. This office also provides technical assistance and equal opportunity training that covers DEIA, Affirmative Outreach, and LEP requirements, including providing LEP Plan templates and guidance. The annual OEO LWDA compliance review collects documentation on Affirmative Outreach activities and recognizes best practices. Resources are provided to LWDAs in OEO’s quarterly newsletter and in between updates are distributed when necessary. For

example, a recent newsletter included the White House DEIA Executive Order and suggestions for implementing DEIA plans at the local board.

#### IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Representatives from each of the core programs and partner programs assisted in writing the Combined State Plan.

The PA WDB held two virtual listening sessions during the summer of 2021 on the development of the WIOA Combined State Plan to gather input from stakeholders across the system. Additionally, each of the board's five standing committees (Youth, Career Pathways & Apprenticeship, Employer Engagement and Sector Strategies, Continuous Improvement, and One-Stop Service Delivery) has focused on goal development related to the Plan.

Pennsylvania has also been convening an Interagency Workgroup, on a monthly basis, composed of all Commonwealth agencies with workforce development-related initiatives. This includes all core partners in the Pennsylvania Departments of Labor & Industry and Education, which administer Titles I, II, III, and IV. Additional partners participated across the Pennsylvania Departments of Aging, Agriculture, Corrections, Community & Economic Development, Human Services, State, Military & Veteran's Affairs, and Conservation & Natural Resources. The WDB facilitated this process, in coordination with the Governor's Office.

All state partners, including the full WDB, had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Plan prior to it being posted for public comment, to ensure the Plan serves the needs of the populations served by each program area and aligns with the state's workforce development initiatives.

#### V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
programs;	
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

## VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

### PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

#### A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

##### Local Workforce Development Areas

LWDA Number	LWDA Name	Counties
SW005	Allegheny County*	Allegheny
SE015	Berks County	Berks
SE020	Bucks County	Bucks
CE175	Central	Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union
SE030	Chester	Chester
SE035	Delaware	Delaware
NE055	Lackawanna	Lackawanna
SE060	Lancaster	Lancaster
LV070	Lehigh Valley	Lehigh and Northampton
NE075	Luzerne-Schuylkill Counties	Luzerne and Schuylkill
SE080	Montgomery	Montgomery
NC125	North Central	Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter



LWDA Number	LWDA Name	Counties
NT130	Northern Tier	Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, Tioga and Wyoming
NW170	Northwest	Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango and Warren
SE090	Philadelphia	Philadelphia
NE135	Pocono Counties	Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Wayne
SC180	South Central	Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lebanon, Perry and York
SA100	Southern Alleghenies	Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset
SW165	Southwest Corner	Beaver, Greene and Washington
SW095	City of Pittsburgh*	City of Pittsburgh (within Allegheny County)
SW110	Tri County	Armstrong, Butler and Indiana
NW145	West Central	Lawrence and Mercer
SW045	Westmoreland-Fayette	Fayette and Westmoreland

\* Three Rivers Workforce Development Board/Partner4Work oversees the Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh workforce development areas.

### Designated Planning Regions

Designated Number	Region Name	Local Workforce Development Area Members
1	Central	Central
2	Lehigh Valley	Lehigh Valley
3	North Central	North Central
4	Northeast	Lackawanna County, Luzerne-Schuylkill Counties and Pocono Counties
5	Northern Tier	Northern Tier
6	Northwest	Northwest and West Central
7	South Central	Lancaster County and South Central
8	Southeast	Berks County, Bucks County, Delaware County, Montgomery

Designated Number	Region Name	Local Workforce Development Area Members
		County and Philadelphia County
9	Southern Alleghenies	Southern Alleghenies
10	Southwest	Allegheny County, City of Pittsburgh, Southwest Corner, Tri County and Westmoreland-Fayette

Pennsylvania issued a revised Workforce System Guidance 02-2014 on June 30, 2015, providing initial designation to Pennsylvania's 23 local workforce investment areas that existed under WIA. The guidance requires Chief Elected Official(s), in collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards and other workforce system stakeholders, to evaluate their Local Areas on a series of factors to include:

- Natural labor market areas;
- Regional economic development areas;
- Existence of education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and career and technical education schools;
- Service delivery and resources available toward the provision of services;
- Benefits of multiple resources within areas that are based on labor markets and natural travel patterns of local residents;
- Capacity and access to public/private transportation resources;
- Education leaders, business leaders, government officials, stakeholder buy-in;
- Availability of Federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer workforce investment activities and other provisions of the WIOA to include resources beyond the 10 percent allowed for administrative expenditures allotted to Local Areas;
- Strategies to provide enhanced quality services to employers and individuals; and
- Local capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds.

The Chief Elected Official(s) and local workforce development board chairs were required to submit a formal letter to the Department by March 1, 2016 describing the evaluation process and addressing each of the factors above. The review was intended to serve as the basis for a local workforce development area either seeking continued designation in its current form or seeking designation as part of a newly proposed workforce development area. A newly proposed workforce development area had to include more than one unit of local government. A request for new area designation had to address the factors listed above and the impact on the workforce development area from which it was withdrawing (if applicable). The request was required to be signed by all Chief Elected Official(s) within the new local workforce development area. Final approval of newly requested workforce development areas rests with

the governor. The governor reserves the right to make additional changes regarding local area designation.

The local area is determined to have performed successfully if it has met or exceeded locally negotiated levels of performance and has not failed any individual measure for the last two consecutive program years before the enactment of WIOA for initial designation and in the first two years of enactment for subsequent designation. The terms “met or exceeded” and “failed” are defined as consistent with how those terms were defined at the time the performance levels were negotiated.

The local area is determined to have sustained fiscal integrity if, within the last two (2) consecutive years preceding the determination of fiscal integrity, they appropriately expended funds and complied with acceptable standards of administration. If a local area has inappropriately expended funds due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provisions involved, gross negligence, or failed to comply with acceptable standards of administration, a formal determination will be generated that indicates this information.

The local area designation appeals process is found within the local area designation process policy is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry website:

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>

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Only after both the internal and external remediation processes are exhausted will the state funding mechanism, or SFM, be triggered. As described in 20 CFR Part 678.730, the SFM is only used when there is an impasse related to infrastructure cost funding. WIOA provides that a state mechanism allocation determination may only be appealed if the determination is inconsistent with the requirements of WIOA Sec. 121(h)(2)(E). Pursuant to 20 CFR 678.750 the permissible grounds for an appeal are that the state’s determination is inconsistent with:

- - the proportionate-share requirements in 20 CFR 678.735(a), or
  - the cost-contribution limitations in 20 CFR 678.735(b), or
  - the cost-contribution caps in 20 CFR 678.738.

A one-stop required partner shall appeal the SFM determination imposed upon it within twenty-one (21) calendar days, consistent with 20 CFR 678.750. The appeal must be a formal written correspondence and make specific reference to that portion of cash, non-cash, or third-party in-kind contributions which the mechanism requires the one-stop required partner to provide.

To be considered for state review, an appeal must:

- Be addressed to the attention of:

Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

651 Boas Street, 17th Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17121

Or the appellant may email the appeal to the attention of:

The PA CareerLink® Finance & Budget unit at RA-LI-PACL-FINOP@pa.gov;

- Contain a subject line identifying the appellant and designating the letter or email as a formal appeal of the SFM determination;
- Identify the basis for the appeal to include full citations from WIOA or the WIOA Final Rules in Title 29 or Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations that support the appeal; and
- The letter or email must be signed and dated by the appellant.

Furthermore, including substantial information supporting the appeal basis within the formal correspondence is recommended.

The state will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within seven calendar days and will ensure all requirements for state review are met. L&I will then submit the appeal, on behalf of the appellant, to the Governor's Policy Office who will return a final determination within forty-five (45) calendar days of receiving the appeal from L&I. Typically, this timeframe will occur between May 16 until June 30; however, the state acknowledges that, in rare circumstances, this timeframe may not always be applicable. Adjustments to these dates may be made as necessary by the commonwealth, but the forty-five (45) calendar-day determination period will be maintained.

Until the appeals process is completed, the appellant will remain liable for its contributions as originally determined in the SFM. If a one-stop partner's appeal to the state results in a change to the one-stop partner's infrastructure-cost contributions, then the MOU between the LWDB and applicable partner(s) *must* be updated to reflect the final one-stop partner infrastructure-cost contributions.

**Note:** The above process is content from the commonwealth's Local Workforce Delivery System - Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, policy, guidance, and other supporting documents. The infrastructure funding agreement appeals process is found within the MOU guidance. You can find these documents here:

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>

## 2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

The Pennsylvania workforce system policies to supersede outdated WIA-era guidance regarding Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B are drafted and in review. Publication will follow the review and receipt of approval of workforce system and state workforce agency leadership, a period of public comment, and appropriate responses to and/or revisions necessitated by that public comment. The revised policies will be published as quickly as is administratively possible on the main L&I policy page at Workforce Policies and Forms (pa.gov).

Finally, the department did not develop a policy regarding the 2015 version of the Trade Act but does follow U.S. DOL Training Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 5-15, dated September 4, 2015.

Governor's set-aside funds will generally be used to promote Governor Wolf's vision of *Jobs that Pay, Schools that Teach, and Government that Works* with more specific emphasis on the five goals for the workforce development system articulated in the Strategic Vision portion of the State Plan.

The commonwealth uses a portion of Governor's set-aside funds to support the Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) with the goal of promoting and growing registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs across the state. The ATO is described in greater detail in the response to how the state will incorporate registered apprenticeships into its strategies and services.

The commonwealth intends to use set-aside funds to provide discretionary grants to LWDBs and other grantees/vendors to support programs and activities that better serve targeted groups of individuals within the workforce development system. The funds are also used to provide expanded services for employers.

Lastly, a portion of set aside funds will be used to accomplish the objectives laid out in CFR 20 §§ 682.200 and 682.210 of the WIOA final rule including but not limited to carrying out monitoring and oversight activities, conducting evaluations, providing technical assistance to state entities and agencies, providing staff training for local areas, operating a fiscal and management accountability information system, providing incentive grants to local areas for performance, implementing innovative programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of all employers, implementing programs to increase the number of individuals training for non-traditional employment, and disseminating labor market information.

Leveraging the State's allocation formula for distribution of funds to core programs, WIOA Title I formula funds provide the foundation for serving dislocated worker populations. LWDBs may also seek Rapid Response additional assistance funds to serve targeted populations, general dislocated worker populations, Trade/WIOA co-enrollment and layoff aversion strategies to include Incumbent worker strategies. Statewide and/or regional initiatives are also acceptable uses of rapid response funds and must reflect a multi-LWDB initiative.

The primary objective of Rapid Response is to provide workers with the resources and services necessary to allow them to find new jobs or get the training and education needed for new careers so they can return to work quickly.

Rapid Response Services (RRS) also helps communities develop proactive and coordinated strategies to access Pennsylvania's economic development systems that help businesses at risk of closing to keep their doors open.

Rapid Response coordinates layoff aversion and outplacement services for employers and workers affected by layoffs, plant closures, or natural disasters. It is not always event-driven; it is a proactive approach to planning for and managing economic transitions. At its best, Rapid Response assists employers with their layoffs by coordinating outplacement services prior to layoff, while supporting the business by working with other state and local stakeholders who can then assist in job expansion. Rapid Response is an introduction to the workforce and economic development systems, and helps workers and employers navigate the Commonwealth's system of user-friendly resources and information to help transition workers into reemployment and assist businesses.

The PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development is responsible for executive oversight of Pennsylvania's RRS activity under WIOA. The Rapid Response/Trade Act Services Unit within the Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations is responsible for the policy development and implementation of the state's Rapid Response program.

The commonwealth uses a regional approach to deliver rapid response assistance. There are L&I Rapid Response Coordinators assigned to geographic areas covering one or more LWDBAs. Rapid Response Coordinators work closely with PA CareerLink® staff as well as the local board or Chief Elected Official(s), and local and state economic development agencies, as appropriate. They meet with the LWDB staff periodically to share information and to discuss major dislocation events. RRS provides information and access to a comprehensive menu of available services and resources to avert or reduce the effect of plant closings and mass layoffs to businesses, communities, and individuals.

Early intervention services provided through RRS offer workers affected by downsizing the best chance to reenter the workforce as quickly as possible. Since inception, RRS has become nationally recognized, often cited by the U.S. Department of Labor as a model for service delivery.

RRS, in concert with partners operating as a single business services team (BST) provides strategic planning that helps area employers become more globally competitive and connect with area economic development and educational institutions to meet their workforce needs. RRS is the state's lead unit delivering a business-focused approach, working with employers to coordinate layoff aversion activities in coordination with the Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN) and other economic development stakeholders working with the affected employer and supply chain companies, as applicable.

L&I, through a competitive process, contracted with the Steel Valley Authority to design and manage SEWN, which provides layoff aversion services to help businesses, particularly in the manufacturing sector, remain competitive and keep workers employed. SEWN and RRS obtain referrals to struggling companies through a variety of sources, including workforce development professionals, LWDBs, financial institutions, company customers, suppliers or vendors, industrial resources centers, local and state economic development agencies, unions, or affected workers themselves. Within 48 hours of receiving a referral, SEWN staff and/or RRS will contact the company and attempt to establish a meeting and site tour. SEWN staff have expertise in several areas of business turnaround and layoff aversion, including financial restructuring; buyouts; succession planning and ownership transition; labor-management relations; high-performance workplace strategies; operations; and cost management.

Rapid Response activities are triggered when L&I learns of a planned closure or layoff, either by receiving a notice as required under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, through the media, or by information provided by community and business leaders. Services may also be offered when Pennsylvania experiences mass job dislocation as the result of a natural disaster. There is no charge to the employer or employee for these services, and they are provided regardless of the reason for the layoff or closing; however, employer participation is vital to the services success

RRS initiates a fact-finding meeting to plan for coordination of services within 48 hours of receipt of notice. Contact is made with the employer and any union organized at the establishment to develop a preliminary service strategy. RRS information meetings are held either at the workplace or at a convenient site to provide workers with a wide range of information about benefits and services that are critical for a successful transition to new employment or training for a high-priority occupation. When possible, information meetings are held prior to the layoff date and on company time. Information is typically provided on the following topics:

- Unemployment insurance;
- Transition teams;
- Outplacement services;
- Health and pension benefits;
- Job-search activities;
- Education services;
- Training programs;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance;
- Social services programs;
- Community and economic development activities;
- Emergency assistance; and
- Crisis counseling

Working in close partnership with CWIA, along with PA CareerLink® and LWDBs, RRS developed an outplacement curriculum delivered to affected workers that uses comprehensive, customizable workshops and a proven “Surviving a Layoff” publication. The customized workshops include information about the realities of job loss, job-search strategies, local Labor Market Information (LMI), using social media as a job-search and networking tool, resume development, job-search resources, household budgeting, and job-interviewing tips.

Crucial to the program’s success is the ability of RRS to gather and synthesize real-time LMI and conduct needs-profiling of Dislocated Workers accomplished through surveys distributed, completed, and collected at RRS informational meetings with affected employees. By understanding the local, regional, and in some cases statewide cause and effect related to a dislocation event, along with the way these circumstances directly affect individual workers, RRS has become an essential component in the commonwealth’s layoff-aversion and reemployment network. The sharing of this information between the workforce development and economic development agencies will enhance the state’s ability to be proactive with services and provide earlier intervention with our employers.

RRS realizes its full potential for employers when it is managed as a business service during the entire business lifecycle. The commonwealth will continue to invest rapid response dollars to fund a layoff-aversion system targeting small- and medium-sized manufacturing firms. RRS staff sit on local PA

CareerLink® and regional economic development BSTs to help employers with turnaround and to market Dislocated Workers to employers, enhancing the value of business services provided by the workforce and economic development systems. RRS staff, as well as the regional SEWN representatives, will also receive technical training to effectively market the Shared-Work Program operated by the Office of Unemployment Compensation Benefits & Services as a component of layoff-aversion strategy.

RRS staff will maintain a comprehensive set of partnerships to provide customers the services, resources, and benefits they are eligible for and need. To complement the current network of partnerships, RRS staff will continue outreach efforts to other entities such as local chapters of the Society for Human Resource Management, manufacturing associations, state and local economic development entities, chambers of commerce, Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships and sector-based associations and business groups. Central labor councils and area labor federations increasing awareness of Rapid Response Services as a business-cycle service linking workforce and economic development.

Rapid Response Additional Assistance (RRAA) funding will be directed to serve LWDAs when local funding balances are insufficient to ensure a continuum of services for Dislocated Workers. Funds may be provided to LWDAs that experience increased numbers of unemployed individual’s due to natural disasters, plant closings, mass layoffs, or other events for provision of direct services to participants.

Through the fact-finding process, RRS staff gather information from the employer related to the layoff/closure. At times, the information shared by the employer reveals that the loss of



business is due to foreign trade impacts. When such information is shared, the RRS staff informs the employer, employees, and union (if applicable) to apply for Trade Act benefits. RRS works with any entity (employer, union, workers) willing to file a Trade petition with the U.S. DOL. RRS provides the technical assistance to complete the Trade petition application and file it with the U.S. DOL accordingly.

The information gathered is shared with all partners in the LWDA to ensure that planning for such dislocation occurs in a timely manner. It also provides the opportunity for RRS staff to recommend that LWDA request additional RR funds to ensure that services can be provided for the Dislocated Workers (DW). When a company has applied for Trade benefits, the additional RR funds can be used to provide “on-site” DW services prior to the company closure. RR and LWDA staff develop a comprehensive plan with the company and union, if applicable, to provide workers with services such as PA CareerLink® registration and access to various workshops related to topics such as healthcare, retirement, training opportunities in the workforce area, and soft skills to re-enter the workforce.

Funds can also be provided to develop customized pre-employment/training services. Local partnerships with community colleges and organizations will help with development and planning of basic computer skills training and pre-GED/basic skills workshops. Planning these services in advance enables the DW to obtain or refresh skills that are needed for the current job market. It may also serve as a platform for more in depth training.

The additional funds will also be used to re-enforce the partnerships established with local employers in the respective workforce area. The RRS staff, with the collaboration of LWDA partners, can opt to arrange various job-fairs for the Trade affected Dislocated Workers. Companies in the workforce area may benefit in filling current open positions and/or take the opportunity to engage in on-the-job-training for workers with transferable skills.

Ultimately, RRS have substantial benefits for the impacted employees, employers and community at large.

RRS helps Dislocated Workers turn the challenge of a layoff into an opportunity by providing information about, and access to, the following services:

- Unemployment compensation;
- Career counseling, resume preparation and job-search assistance;
- Education and training opportunities, including Trade Adjustment Assistance;
- Locally available supportive services;
- Referrals and information about English as a second language or Limited English Proficiency classes;
- Referrals and information about Adult Basic Education and high school equivalency preparation classes;
- Referrals and information about services available through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- Dislocated Worker transition teams;

- Surviving a layoff, resume preparation, and interviewing skills workshops;
- Information about the local labor market;
- Information about retirement-plan benefits, Social Security and health-insurance options; and
- Services exclusively for veterans and adults with disabilities.

When employers contact RRS, they can expect:

- A quick response to transition planning needs;
- Confidentiality concerning business decisions;
- Help throughout their entire business cycle;
- Help understanding government regulations;
- Information about alternatives that may reduce or avoid layoffs;
- For small- to medium-sized businesses, referral to agencies that can help in restructuring to avoid layoffs or closing the business; and
- Higher productivity and worker morale and lower absenteeism during the layoff event due to reduced stress.

Lastly, community involvement forms the basis for some of the most dynamic and effective transition services available. The benefits of RRS to the community include:

- Working with elected officials at the state and local levels;
- Helping to save the local tax base by keeping workers employed;
- Lessening adverse economic effects on other businesses within the community;
- Responding to job and business loss when a natural disaster occurs;
- Coordinating available resources by tapping into the community's service providers;
- Reducing emotional and financial stress on the community by offering workshops for unemployed workers, and local affected supply-chain or vendor companies; and
- Coordinating support groups and transition teams for unemployed workers.

Pennsylvania's Rapid Response Information Guide can be found here: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Workforce-Development/warn/Pages/Resources.aspx>

The PA Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) Rapid Response Unit works as the initial point of contact for businesses, emergency management teams to assist the businesses, and Dislocated Workers that are affected by a natural disaster. The Rapid Response Services Unit works in conjunction with Federal, State, and Local Emergency Coordinators to respond to affected businesses. Rapid Response Coordinators work with their regional and local emergency teams to develop contingency plans. Rapid Response works with the business through the business downturn cycle regardless if the disaster is PEMA or FEMA designated. If the disaster

has an immediate impact on local business operations, Rapid Response coordinates the efforts with their local teams including Unemployment Compensation, local workforce development and economic development entities, and other stakeholders to tailor the response to the specific needs of the affected business and Dislocated Workers.

Rapid Response Coordinators work with LWDBs, fiscal agents, and operators to assure delivery of services and assist in the application for additional workforce funds when necessary. WIOA permits states to provide Rapid Response Additional Assistance funds to Local Areas with an increased number of unemployed individuals, due to natural disasters, plant closings, mass layoffs, or other events, if there are not adequate local funds to assist the Dislocated Workers.

Pennsylvania's Rapid Response Information Guide can be found here: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Workforce-Development/warn/Pages/Resources.aspx>

The PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) placed Trade Act Services, which administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and RRS within the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations to align early intervention with TAA program administration. RRS markets TAA to companies, workers, and unions (if applicable) through the rapid response process. Within 48 hours of receiving a WARN notice (or any other form of Public Notice) from a company that is either closing or laying-off, a RR Coordinator contacts the employer and initiates a fact-finding meeting. Information is gathered on the following items:

- Reason for closure/layoff
- Size of the workforce
- Demographics of the workforce
- Supply chain
- Timeframe in which closure/layoff will take place.

Following this information gathering, the RR Coordinator provides a summary of workforce services that will benefit the affected workers such as on-site workshops covering resume writing, job search skills, interviewing techniques, managing a household budget, and Unemployment Compensation. These pre-layoff workshops serve as a precursor for the workers in preparing for the upcoming layoff. Further, the RR Coordinator explains the benefits of having the company apply for Trade Act benefits on behalf of their workforce. The RR Coordinator reviews the benefits that the Trade Act offers to workers, emphasizing the training opportunities available for a higher skilled workforce in the respective area. The RR Coordinator assists the employer (or a group of two workers or more) with completing a Trade Act petition application on site and encourages sending the completed application via the US DOL website (<https://doleta.gov/tradeact/>). Finally, the employer is left with an informational folder providing a summary of what has been reviewed during the fact-finding meeting and schedules a follow-up meeting for next steps.

With the information gathered during the fact-finding meeting, the RR Coordinator assembles a Rapid Response Team that can meet the needs of the workers in a dislocation. The demographic

information gathered during fact-finding allows for RR Services to focus in on the needs of the workers. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP);
- Workers near Retirement Age;
- Workers lacking a High School Diploma;
- Workers with limited or no post-secondary education; and
- Transportation barriers.

The RR Coordinator encourages the LWDB to request additional Rapid Response funds to ensure that enough funds for supportive services are available to serve the workers in question, specifically in areas that are identified as barriers to employment. A Rapid Response Team will include specialists that will cover:

- Unemployment Insurance;
- Health and Pension Benefits;
- Job Search Activities;
- Education Services;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance;
- Social Service Programs;
- Community and Economic Development; and
- Other members deemed necessary to serve a specific dislocation.

The RR Coordinator follows up with the employer to schedule pre-layoff workshops as well as a Rapid Response Information Meeting (RRIM) with the affected workers. Various dates can be scheduled to accommodate large dislocations. The RR Coordinator makes it a priority to involve the employer and union (if applicable) in planning the RRIM to cover subjects including, but not limited to, location of the event, number of invitees, and information that will be presented. The RRIM is usually scheduled four to six weeks prior to layoff/closure date. The RR Coordinator will also follow up with the employer to check the status of the Trade petition application. If the employer has not moved ahead with the application, the RR Coordinator will encourage the union (if applicable) and/or workers to submit a Trade petition application. In situations where three workers are unable to come together to complete a Trade petition application, the Labor and Industry will submit it on the workers' behalf.

The RR Coordinator meets with the assembled RR Team to provide an overview of how the event will unfold to include order of presenters and general flow of the event. A strong emphasis is given to providing the participant with up-to-date information on UC, health benefits, and workforce services. Workers are given an overview of what their local PA CareerLink® offers, include training, one-on-one job search assistance, career assessment, and case management services built on an Individual Employment Plan tailored to the worker needs. PA CareerLink® staff is present at the RRIM to schedule one-on-one appointments with workers who want to access workforce benefits. Each worker present at the RRIM completes a

survey that gathers critical information for ongoing follow-up services (contact information, education background, work history, skills, interest in training/job search, etc.) These surveys are reviewed by RR Services staff and shared with local PA CareerLink® case managers who will provide follow-up services to these workers. The surveys provide a solid foundation for the case managers to build a plan with the worker that leads to employment/training opportunities. Additionally, the surveys also provide good indicators on what employment barriers exist (limited education, job skills, LEP, etc.) and allow for appropriate referrals to PA CareerLink® partners that can assist workers overcome such barriers. RR Coordinators maintain contact with the employer during the layoff/closure period to ensure that all workers receive the information presented at the RRIM. The RR Coordinator also encourages the formation of a Dislocated Worker Transition Team. These teams are mostly made up of workers, & managers within the company that can serve as ombudsmen representing the voice of the workforce, to coordinate outreach and service delivery. Emerging issues can be addressed, including further information on specific topics, development of newsletters, and arrangement of smaller worker groups that address specific topics of interest.

Upon receiving notification from US DOL that a TAA petition has been approved/certified, the RR Coordinator contacts the employer and union (if applicable). The Federal Programs unit in the UC Office of Benefits Policy obtains a worker-list from the employer and sends out notification to all workers of the potential eligibility for Trade Act benefits. Next, the RR Coordinator collaborates with local PA CareerLink® Trade, Title I and Unemployment Compensation service staff to set up a Trade Benefits Rights Interview (BRI) meeting date convenient for the employer and workers. The RR Coordinator recommends BRI meetings to be held at the actual company site to maximize participation. Workers receive a personal invitation to the BRI meeting and obtain a copy of the information that will be reviewed during the meeting.

Rapid Response Services staff highlight the benefits that the Trade Act offers to assist in returning to the workforce by providing a detailed timeline for workers to follow. It emphasizes the services provided at the PA CareerLink® as a staging point to access Trade benefits in a timely manner. A strong emphasis is given to TAA training, High Priority Occupations, and important deadlines that have an impact on time sensitive benefits. Case managers are present to schedule one-on-one appointments with TAA eligible workers who have an immediate interest in Trade benefits.

Rapid Response Services staff will also recommend holding an Enrollment Assessment (EA) session to take place one to two weeks after the BRI is held, specifically for larger dislocations. EA sessions are a collaborative effort among PA CareerLink® partners present at the different stations. These stations serve the purpose of:

- Explaining Trade Act benefits on an individual basis;
- Full-enrollment on the PA CareerLink® system;
- Completion of dual-enrollment;
- Initial skills assessment;
- WIOA supportive services;
- Initiating the IEP;

- Overview of the Reemployment Trade Adjustment Allowance (RTAA) for workers 50 years of age or older;
- Scheduling comprehensive assessment for participants interested in training
- Reviewing the training programs and providers in the Local Area; and
- next steps/follow-up appointments.

The EA sessions allow for a TAA eligible worker to go through a smooth process where there is a clear understanding of expectations and results. Furthermore, having the dual-enrollment completed at an early stage of case management allows for the TAA eligible worker to take full advantage of all workforce services offered under the PA CareerLink® umbrella. Once the EA session is completed, a case manager is identified, who assists in making sure the worker accesses the TAA benefit(s) prior to the deadline. The EA session allows for the Local Area to pull additional resources by having staff from other parts of the commonwealth assist with the logistics of such an event. It also allows for the case managers to identify TAA workers with a strong interest in using Trade Act benefits to secure suitable employment. The RR Coordinator encourages the involvement of the DWTT to encourage workers to use Trade benefits and engage with the PA CareerLink® staff.

The commonwealth implemented an online application for TAA training, job-search, and relocation allowances, and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) programs. This online application is accessed by Dislocated Workers, PA CareerLink® Merit staff and training providers, to add information, in real time. PA CareerLink® merit staff helps trade-affected workers complete their applications and assess workers' skills and experiences.

Pennsylvania's service delivery system provides greater choice and focuses resources where Dislocated Workers most need them. Pennsylvania co-enrolls all TAA-eligible workers in the WIOA program to ensure that all Trade participants receive the full range of assistance available to Dislocated Workers.

## B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### 1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

The state continues to use Work-Based training models as part of its strategy to meet the demands of employers looking for skilled workers and job seekers looking for a career. The local workforce development areas will continue to evaluate based on WIOA requirements and local priorities to identify what are the pressing training needs for employers. The Local Workforce Development Boards address their work-based training strategy in their local plans which are reviewed and approved by the state. The methods of training will be tailored to the employer needs but may include one or a combination of Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), On-the-Job Training (OJT), classroom training, customized training, and Apprenticeships. Through the convening of industry partnerships or similar activities, employers will continue to have direct communication with training providers that can tailor/create a curriculum to address a skills-gap need. Where possible, the workforce partners will consider leveraging program funds to maximize the customer training experience.

### 2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

The PA Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) works closely with LWDBs and PA CareerLink® offices from across the commonwealth to build awareness and knowledge around

apprenticeships. In addition to regularly presenting Apprenticeship 101 webinars and providing additional resources to workforce staff, the ATO also supports the Registered Apprenticeship Navigator program, an apprenticeship program that trains people to start and manage apprenticeship programs. Additionally, through the 2020/2021 Governor's PAsmart Growing Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeships funding, \$1 million is available for intermediaries to support the statewide Apprenticeship Ambassador Network through creating new or supporting existing local and/or regional apprenticeship ambassador networks designed to grow Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship in local areas. It is a requirement of grantees to partner with PA CareerLink® or One-Stop Centers with a concentration on training or supporting Title One staff or other workforce development professionals who act as Ambassadors of Apprenticeship and grow these programs.

Starting in 2022, the ATO will be offering strategic training for workforce development staff regarding serving clients through Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship, launching our Desk Guide for those working in our CareerLinks on how to link jobseekers to apprenticeship and workforce funding. This Guide provides PA CareerLink® Staff with the information on how and why to connect jobseeker and employer clients to Registered Apprenticeship, how connecting job seekers with registered apprenticeships programs can help states and local areas meet their targets on the WIOA primary indicators, and when to exit a WIOA client positively from the CWDS system even when still participating in a Registered Apprenticeship. The document includes information on how you can potentially utilize WIOA and alternate workforce funding to support Registered Apprenticeship (subject to local policy and procedures) and procedures for using the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) of record to indicate the use of WIOA dollars to support a client in a Registered Apprenticeship.

The ATO continues to work to update the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS), the State System of Record, to allow better tracking of apprentices and apprenticeship programs in the state. The updates will allow CWDS to match the depth of individual record level data already recorded in the RAPIDS case management system, allowing apprenticeship information to be included in the PIRL data reported to DOL. Over the past quarter, the ATO continued to work with its contractor Deloitte to create a plan and process for system upgrades.

The 2020/2021 Governor's PAsmart Growing Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships initiative was created in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship and Training Office to provide up to \$12.5 million in two competitive grant opportunities to align, expand and diversify the apprenticeship model to include non-traditional occupations, non-traditional program models and non-traditional populations. This grant program seeks to expand Registered Apprenticeships in new industries and occupations and aims to advance individuals along career pathways with secondary and post-secondary schools. Additionally, this initiative is intended to reach underrepresented populations, including women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, veterans, socio-economic disadvantaged individuals, individuals who speak English as a second language, individuals who were previously incarcerated, or individuals experiencing multiple barriers to employment. Specifically, these funds will support apprenticeship through the following opportunities:

- \$11.5 million is available to build, support and expand Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs with specific focus on diverse talent pipelines and underserved populations, non-traditional occupations, alignment with secondary

and/or post-secondary educational institutions concentrating on Career Pathway system growth, and expedited growth through multi-county or statewide initiatives.

- \$1 million is available to support Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeship through ambassador networks across the Commonwealth.

Additionally, the ATO is taking steps to align the Career Pathways and Apprenticeship system more closely through forging strategic partnerships with Career & Technology Centers (CTC) statewide to see how their existing vocational programs can fit into the Registered Apprenticeship Ecosystem.

### 3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

WIOA provides an opportunity for registered apprenticeship programs to be active partners in the public workforce system. These programs are a proven job-driven training mechanism that provides workers with career pathways and opportunities to earn while they learn. This effectively meets the needs of both jobseekers and employers.

Under WIOA Title I-B, registered apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application procedures and information requirements as other training providers considering the detailed application and vetting procedures that apprenticeship programs already undergo to become registered. In Pennsylvania, this means that apprenticeship programs, registered with PA Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship and Training Office can be integrated onto the commonwealth's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors that request to be eligible training providers are automatically eligible to be included on the Eligible Apprenticeship List housed within the ETP and will remain if the program is registered or until the program sponsor submits notification that it no longer wishes to be on the list. While automatically eligible, not all registered apprenticeship sponsors may desire to be included on the statewide ETPL.

However, inclusion allows eligible participants and employers to use available WIOA Title I-B funds for training in registered apprenticeship programs, in accordance with the Act; and more directly connects apprenticeship programs to jobseekers through the commonwealth's PA CareerLink® locations.

Registered apprenticeship programs differ from other training providers in some other respects. Most notably, a participant's enrollment occurs only through an agreement between the participant, the registered apprenticeship program sponsor and/or an employer. Specifically, some apprenticeship programs work with a single employer, whereas others may operate through a joint labor-management organization where participants are selected for the apprenticeship but not immediately hired by a specific employer.

Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors may request, at any time, to be added to the statewide ETPL. Additionally, apprenticeship program sponsors may request, at any time, to be removed from the statewide ETPL. Any such requests must be communicated to L&I through the following resource account: [apprenticeship@pa.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@pa.gov). The statewide ETPL, which can be electronically accessed at [www.pacareerlink.pa.gov](http://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov), will be modified no less than quarterly by L&I.



For Registered Apprenticeship Programs approved after March 2021, the sponsor's registration paperwork includes an explanation of the benefits of inclusion on the statewide ETPL and allows a Sponsor to acknowledge that they would like to be included on it. An email will be sent out annually to program sponsor main contacts, sharing the content found in appendix A of the ETPL policy, including the below outlined directions for the sponsor(s) to opt in if they have not already done so. The following outlines the process for Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors seeking inclusion on (opt in) or exclusion from (opt out) the statewide ETPL.

**Step One.** Established Programs wishing to be included on the Eligible Apprenticeship List housed within the Statewide ETPL must notify L&I and submit the following information to L&I so they can verify registration with the state:

- Occupations included within the registered apprenticeship program; and
- The name, address and RAPIDS # of the registered apprenticeship program sponsor.

All notifications must be submitted to the following resource account: [apprenticeship@pa.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@pa.gov)

**Step Two.** Once the registration status has been verified, L&I will add the registered apprenticeship to the statewide ETPL. Such apprenticeships will remain on the list as long as the entity's registration status remains valid or until a program sponsor requests to have a program removed.

Training providers interested in having courses/programs included on Pennsylvania's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) may apply electronically through the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) to one (1) of twenty-three (23) local workforce development area (LWDA) offices located throughout Pennsylvania. Available WIOA Title I funds and restriction of such courses/programs are impacted by the policies and guidance issued from the Pennsylvania's Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) as well as Pennsylvania's Local Workforce Development Boards' respective policies and guidance.

Each program must be listed individually and only approved once through the application process that starts locally. Local workforce development board approval is the first step of a two-step process for inclusion on the statewide ETPL. Approval by the Department, is the second and final step for having a course/program become eligible and included on the statewide ETPL. Each step of approval should take no longer than thirty (30) calendar days. If a training service application is rejected in an area due to local policies, a training provider may apply to another local area to have the training included on the statewide ETPL.

The statewide ETPL is an annual list. Training providers must reapply for continued eligibility to have available courses/programs remain on the statewide list for the following year. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.

Training providers' courses/programs listed on the statewide ETPL that have a fully executed Trade Master Agreement (TMA) with the Department may be considered by dislocated workers for funding by the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program. TAA training is not subject to WIOA performance measures. Interested training providers may submit course/program service applications through CWDS for the TAA-Eligible only Training Programs/Provider Statewide List. Training providers must have a TMA with the Department before a training program can be considered by a participant eligible for trade benefits.

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Institutions of higher education are required to provide program performance data for courses/programs to be considered for approval and inclusion on the statewide ETPL. The Department offers two (2) different ways of submitting data for performance measures. Training providers may enter students' Social Security numbers (SSNs) in CWDS for comparison of employment and wage data for aggregate training and performance data, or training providers may enter their own aggregate data which would not require students' SSNs. Aggregate data are needed for each performance question on the course/program application. Aggregate data will only be accepted from training providers if:

- the data are independently validated by a third party, such as a public accounting firm; or
- the necessary data can be verified against a copy of the provider's accrediting agency's annual report for the course/program's performance.

If aggregate data are submitted, a hard copy of the report must be sent to the local ETPL point of contact within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the course/program is submitted in CWDS. Training course/program applications cannot be approved at the local level until after the local point of contact has reviewed and approved all required documentation.

Data are collected on the scheduled completion/exit dates of training providers' students during a one-year reporting period. Due to the reporting timeline for wage record information, CWDS will advance the reporting period one (1) quarter at the end of each quarter. Student course/program completion data must be entered based on the following reporting periods.

<b>ETPL Applications Submitted</b>	<b>Reporting Period for Scheduled Exit Dates of Students</b>
07/01/2021 - 09/30/2021	01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019
10/01/2021 - 12/31/2021	04/01/2019 - 03/31/2020
01/01/2022 - 03/31/2022	07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020
04/01/2022 - 06/30/2022	10/01/2019 - 09/30/2020

<b>ETPL Applications Submitted</b>	<b>Reporting Period for Scheduled Exit Dates of Students</b>
07/01/2022 - 09/30/2022	01/01/2020 - 12/31/2020

Courses/programs must meet the following criteria for inclusion on the statewide ETPL:

Facility must meet one (1) of fourteen (14) certification categories;

Facility must comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990;

Facility must abide by WIOA nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions;

Courses/programs must be available to the general public;

Courses/programs must meet established performance measures; and

Courses/programs must train for a high priority occupation(s).

Training providers must meet all applicable state and federal requirements for operating certain schools. It is the responsibility of the individual training provider to contact the appropriate state agency to be properly licensed or approved. Depending on what type of school is being operated, a training provider may have to register, be licensed, or receive a permit or approval from one or more various state/federal agencies.

Training providers submitting training course/program applications must meet one (1) of the following categories:

**Auctioneers.** State Board of Auctioneer Examiners, 63 P.S. §734. 1 et seq and 49 PA Code §1.11;

**Aviation.** Schools that provide training or instruction in flying and are regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration. However, as an example, if the school chooses to offer non-flying training in the field of Aircraft Mechanics, then the program must be licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE);

**Barber schools.** State Board of Barber Examiners, 63 P.S. §562;

**Cosmetology Schools.** State Board of Cosmetology, 63 P.S. §512. However, as an example, if the school chooses to offer Massage Therapy, then the program must be licensed by PDE;

**Community-Based Organizations.** Groups of individuals organized by and for a particular community of people based on shared interests and/or attributes providing occupational skills training;

**Out-of-State Schools.** Schools providing educational instruction at institutions within the confines of their state that do not have a physical presence within Pennsylvania;

**Private Tutorial Schools.** PDE licensed schools providing individual instruction by a private tutor;

**Real Estate.** Schools providing training in the field of real estate - State Real Estate Commission, 63 P.S. §455.402 and/or schools providing training for real estate appraisal - State Real Estate Commission, 63 P.S. §§ 457.5(2). Training providers will be required to supply their license number;

**Registered Apprenticeships.** Apprenticeship Programs registered with the PA Department of Labor and Industry Apprenticeship and Training Office.

**Hospital Schools.** Operated by a hospital licensed under the Health Care Facilities Act, 35 P.S. §§448.101 – 448.904 and accredited by a regional or national accreditation agency; educational programs for LPNs, RNs and CRNPs are approved by the State Board of Nursing, 49 PA Code §§21.31-21.33 and 49 PA Code §21.161;

**Colleges and Universities.** Schools authorized to award degrees under 24 PA C.S. §6505 (relating to power to confer degrees) other than those schools approved to award specialized associate degrees under §§42.11-42.14 (relating to specialized associate degree programs approval procedure), this includes four-year colleges;

**Pennsylvania Schools.** Schools operated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or a political subdivision thereof, such as the PDE's Stevens College of Technology, community colleges or vocational technical schools;

**Service Occupations.** Schools/classes providing training in public service or other service occupations. Persons engaged in public service occupations are limited to ambulance personnel, emergency medical technicians, firefighters, police, school bus drivers, and school crossing guards. Persons engaged in other service occupations are limited to maids, butlers, and chauffeurs; and

**Private Licensed Schools.** Act 174 of 1986, the Private Licensed Schools Act (PLSA), requires postsecondary institutions that offer career training in Pennsylvania be licensed by the State Board of Private Licensed Schools. Schools which meet all five (5) of the following requirements **must be licensed before operating:** (1) offers classes or maintains a school, (2) charges tuition

or makes a profit from its fees, (3) contracts with members of the public directly rather than through a third party, (4) prepares those members of the public to pursue employment as defined in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles as supplemented or amended, and (5) is not specifically exempt under the statute. For further information, training providers should contact PDE's Division of Private Licensed Schools, at 717-783-8228 or visit PDE's website at <http://www.education.pa.gov>.

If a training institution does not fall into one of the fourteen (14) certification categories listed above, it may be considered for inclusion on the statewide ETPL on a case-by-case basis. Local Workforce Development Boards and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) provide recommendations for provider approval or rejection. Final approval for inclusion on the ETPL is determined by the Department of Labor & Industry.

Pennsylvania's public workforce development system targets education and training funds to high priority occupations (HPOs). HPOs are a direct result of Pennsylvania's industry-driven approach to workforce development. These occupations are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs and are most likely to provide family sustaining wages.

Regional HPO lists guide public workforce investments and are evaluated on an annual basis to ensure investments keep pace with rapidly changing technology and labor market demands. Local areas are responsible for ensuring that the training courses/programs of study accurately correspond to the occupation(s) selected. Educational institutions and local areas can submit documentation to have an occupation added to their regional HPO list.

The current ETPL policy can be found here:

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>

The following required conditions will be added to the initial eligibility criteria: a description of each program of training services to be offered and information concerning whether a provider is in partnership with a business.

The following required conditions will be added to the continuing eligibility criteria of the policy:

- a description of access to training services throughout the commonwealth (including rural areas and through technology use); information reported to state agencies on federal and state training programs other than WIOA Title I-B programs;
- the training provider's ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and credentials;
- the training provider's ability to offer programs that lead to a recognized post-secondary credentials;

- the quality of the program of training services including programs that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential; and
- the training provider's ability to provide trainings that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities and a description of the timeliness and accuracy of the training provider's performance reports.

The updated ETP policy includes description of the process for removing a training provider and the appeals process for a removed provider. The policy contains a definition of what the commonwealth considers to be a "substantial violation of the requirement to timely and accurately submit all required information."

**4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM**

Priority of service, established precedence requirements based on a grading of priority, shall be provided by the commonwealth LWDBs and PA CareerLink® offices for Title I Adult services. The commonwealth has established measures to monitor the implementation and assess the effectiveness of priority of service for this program. The commonwealth has established measures to monitor the implementation and assess the effectiveness of priority of service for this program.

Statutory priority groups established by WIOA, in relation to the Title I Adult program, are the categories of individuals who are eligible to receive priority of service. Those categories are:

- Recipients of public assistance;
- Low-income individual; and
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Adult precedence is determined for the priority groups during eligibility and enrollment. Veterans and eligible spouses within these groups receive priority over non-veterans. The commonwealth shall also allow a local area to identify a local discretionary priority group to include other categories of individuals with barriers to employment for the provision of individualized career services and training services funded through the Adult program.

The priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses applies across all qualified employment and training programs. The priority of service for public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient is a statutory priority that applies only to the receipt of individualized career services and training services in the WIOA title I Adult program. Priority of service for the WIOA title I Adult program must be applied in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who meet the requirements of a statutory priority group and Adult program eligibility must receive the highest level of priority for services;
2. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who meet the requirements of a statutory priority group and Adult program eligibility receive the second level of priority for services;
3. All other veterans and eligible spouses who do not meet the requirements of a statutory priority group but do meet Adult program eligibility, receive the third level of priority for services;
4. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the requirements of a statutory priority group but do meet a local area or Governor established discretionary priority and Adult program eligibility, receive the fourth level of priority for services; and
5. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the requirements of a statutory priority group and do not meet the local discretionary priority, but do meet Adult program eligibility, receive the fifth level of priority for services.

LWDBs and PA CareerLink® offices will be required to collect data for each of the three categories of priority of service that records the number of individuals who were served, and the levels of performance achieved. The commonwealth will monitor data reported by LWDBs and PA CareerLink® offices to determine the percentage of those individuals in the three WIOA priority groups who are being served through the Adult program in comparison to all other individuals not receiving required WIOA priority who are being served through the Adult program. For this assessment, only individuals included in the three WIOA priority groups receiving value-added services through the Adult program funds will be counted as “individuals who are receiving priority.” Individuals made eligible for priority of service through local discretionary priority of service will be counted as “individuals who are not receiving any priority of service.”

Should the percentage of “individuals who are receiving priority” be less than 50.1 percent, the commonwealth shall provide the LWDB or PA CareerLink® office with technical assistance to ensure that effective affirmative outreach efforts to individuals with priority of service are made. The 50.1 percent requirement applies to all individuals who receive Adult services. Note that the 50.1 percent requirement does not equate with satisfaction of the priority of service requirements but rather is an indicator of whether affirmative outreach efforts are needed to ensure that those with priority of service are served.

In their Local Plans, LWDBs, and PA CareerLink® offices will continue to be required to state the additional methods by which they will apply the WIOA priority of service requirements and the commonwealth’s policy regarding priority of service. LWDB’s will also identify the local area’s discretionary priority and any additional requirements, if a local discretionary priority group exists. In their WIOA plans, LWDBs must communicate the methods used to apply priority of service requirements and any local discretionary priority, including a description of the following:

- How data will be obtained for each of the three priority groups in their service area and the approximate number of individuals in each category.

- The outreach that will be completed to inform the public of Pennsylvania's priority of service policy.
- How outreach will be targeted to best reach those potentially eligible for priority of service and any agencies that serve them.
- How individuals seeking access to WIOA services will be informed of their priority of service, such as through posters and prominent placement of other information.
- How individuals entitled to priority of service, when otherwise deemed eligible for program participation, will affirmatively be identified and informed of the full array of services available.
- The assessments that will be used to identify barriers to employment among those entitled to priority of service and the services needed to address them.
- The process by which Individual Employment Plans will be developed for persons entitled to priority of service that will address, in addition to career service and training needs, any barriers to employment they may have.
- How the spectrum of persons entitled to priority of service will be served including those such as English language learners, who may require additional resources.
- How the needs of individuals with barriers to employment will be addressed in the delivery of services, such as ensuring that appropriate career planning services are provided. This should include a detailed description of how appropriate career planning services will be provided, or arranged for, through collaboration with other agencies if the LWDB or PA CareerLink® office lacks the required expertise.
- How access to services will be ensured, such as interpreters and translated documents for English language learners, as well as for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- How staff will be trained to understand which individuals are entitled to priority of service and how to be responsive to their needs.
- What, if any, local discretionary priority of service has been established for a specific program year and what data will be used to support the need or benefit for the discretionary priority.

More information regarding WIOA Title I Adult program priority of service is provided in the commonwealth's priority of service policy.

##### 5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

WIOA provides flexibility to LWDBs to provide services in the areas of greatest need by allowing fund transfers of up to 100 percent of a program year allocation between the local adult and the local Dislocated Worker allocations. In accordance with WIOA's regulations that require the governor to establish factors for approving such transfers, the commonwealth provides the following criteria for local WDBs to request transfers between these funding streams:

- Local Boards must seek approval for transferring funds between the adult and Dislocated Worker funding allocations by submitting a transfer request to the Department of Labor & Industry's (L&I) Bureau of Workforce Development Administration (BWDA). For a transfer request to be approved and fully executed prior



to June 30, all transfer requests must be received no later than April 15. Written requests must be submitted to L&I on a Funds Request Form as directed in the Workforce System Policy WSP 03-2015, Financial Management Guide, page 5-8 through 5-9 and Appendix A.

- A local area must consider how it will meet adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators before requesting such transfer since the negotiated levels of performance for the primary indicators remain in effect.
- LWDBs must attest to the following when submitting a transfer request:
  - Employment and training activities of the program that funds are being transferred from or the program that funds are being transferred will not be adversely impacted.
  - Any transfer of funds from the Dislocated Worker program to the adult program to be adult program funds fall under the priority requirements of the adult program. Likewise, any transfer of funds from the adult program to the Dislocated Worker program will fall under the requirements of the Dislocated Worker program;
  - A local area is still responsible for meeting the adjusted levels of performance for any participants that it is required to serve; and
  - When funds are transferred from one program to another, the transferred funds adopt the identity of the new fund source and are bound by all requirements of that source.

As indicated in the commonwealth's workforce system policy (WSP) on financial management, the maximum dollar amount that a local area can transfer is calculated against the total base annual allocation (excluding any transfers or other adjustments to the allocation amount) for the funding stream that the funds are being transferred from. It should also be noted that administrative funds must be included with the transferred program funds based upon a 90/10 percent program to administrative split. Therefore, Local Areas must have adequate administrative funds available before BWDA will approve a transfer request.

For reference, transferred funds retain their federal year-of-appropriation identity and must be accounted for and reported accordingly. For example, PY 2016 WIOA Adult funds can only be transferred to the PY 2016 WIOA Dislocated Worker program. All transfers assume the identity and applicable requirements of the funding stream receiving the transfer. Expenditures associated with the transferred funds are tracked or accounted for separately. Transferred funds are accounted for, and reported, as part of the total available funds in the originally allocated program.

Transfer requests approved will result in a separate Notice of Obligation (NOO) and contract number being issued for the transferred amount, while the program in which the amount is being transferred from will be revised to reflect the reduced allocation. The issuance of said NOOs will serve as a local area's official notification that the transfer is approved. Local Areas will receive notification of any transfer request that is not approved.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN  
SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]

Every LWDB will be required to have a youth standing committee, whose activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Providing information and assisting with planning, operational oversight, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth;
- Recommending policy direction to the local board for the design, development, and implementation of programs that benefit all youth;
- Recommending the design of a comprehensive community workforce development system;
- Recommending ways to leverage resources and coordinate services among schools, public programs, and community-based organizations serving youth;
- Recommending ways to coordinate youth services and recommend eligible youth service providers;
- Recommending inclusive and diverse approaches to programming and organizational capacity to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion when serving diverse populations;
- Providing on-going leadership and support for continuous quality improvement for local youth programs; and
- Overseeing eligible youth providers and other aspects of youth programs.

The commonwealth will strongly encourage LWDBs and their standing youth committees to think comprehensively and systematically about youth programs and services described in WIOA Section 129, and to establish youth priorities in the WIOA Local Plans that allow for the provision of services to as many eligible youth as possible, especially out-of-school youth, or OSY, older youth, and those young people who are most at risk of not acquiring the necessary skills and abilities to attain meaningful employment.

The success of an impactful WIOA youth program is dependent on the competitive procurement of qualified providers of the youth workforce activities as outlined in WIOA Section 129, and active oversight of their performance in accordance with WIOA Section 116. Successful implementation of WIOA youth services begins with the incorporation of WIOA's youth program requirements into Requests for Proposals (RFPs), subsequent contracts, and existing youth provider contracts.

Such requirements include:

- The expenditure of a minimum of 75% of funding on services to OSY youth;
- The expenditure of 20% of funding on the provision of work experiences for youth, including those with significant barriers to employment;

- The development of strong career pathways for youth that will lead to self or family sustaining wages and lifelong career opportunities;
- The co-enrollment of eligible youth into appropriate partner programs and activities, including TANF;
- The provision of the 14 required youth program design elements;
- The provider's past record of success with the retention of youth participants in education, training activities, or unsubsidized employment during the second and fourth quarters after program exit; and
- A detailed description of the local board's negotiated performance goals with the commonwealth for which the provider has a role in meeting and/or exceeding.

Additionally, local areas are strongly encouraged to employ single-year provider contracts with the inclusion of a renewal option for additional years, rather than multi-year contracts. Local Boards will establish criteria to ensure that newer providers with less experience in the provision of WIOA youth services are afforded the opportunity to compete with more established providers for a contract. Criteria will also be established and included in contracts that outline the right of the local board to terminate a provider's contract for cause, such as fraud or failure to meet established performance standards.

The commonwealth will also work with LWDBs to explore the use of pay-for-performance approaches, as appropriate, when they appear to have the potential to produce positive returns on investment and result in better services for targeted populations.

The commonwealth will encourage LWDBs to assist with Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce partnerships, where relevant, on industry-specific career awareness, school-to-work, and other pipeline activities for youth.

Finally, to ease burdens on both applicants and providers that serve OSY who are most in need, the commonwealth will require providers to allow self-attestation for OSY under WIOA eligibility determination criteria, consistent with federal rulemaking. An applicant will become eligible for youth services by providing a statement that addresses the required element that may make the applicant eligible to receive services as an OSY, signing and dating a form acknowledging this status, followed by verification conducted by workforce staff that such information meets WIOA eligibility criteria for OSY. The key elements for self-attestation are the participant identifying his or her status for permitted elements and signing and dating a form attesting to this self-identification. The commonwealth will work with LWDBs to develop additional self-attestation policies and procedures that are consistent with the commonwealth's self-attestation policy.

## 2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

Through WIOA the OSY expenditure rate increased from 30% to 75%. The increase in funds and other resources allowed a greater focus to be placed on serving our OSY population who faced

the greatest challenges in attaining meaningful career pathways and employment. To assist with this paradigm shift, the commonwealth developed several standing WIOA workgroups comprised of stakeholders from various levels of Pennsylvania's workforce system.

An overall goal of the WIOA Youth Service Workgroup, led by L&I TANF Youth Development Program staff, was to provide recommendations that would help build a workforce system to meet the demands of current and future customers and employers. Workgroup members consisted of representatives from Pennsylvania's youth-serving organizations and were tasked with examining multiple strategies to deliver WIOA youth services that focused on intensive outreach and the engagement of disconnected youth and young adults. These efforts resulted in recommendations for co-enrollment, partnerships, career pathways/sector strategies, retention, and performance measures.

L&I has used many of the recommendations identified in these workgroups to develop more robust overall youth strategies. One such strategy has led to the issuance of a guidance document that provided new definitions for youth to enable a larger number of OSY to be more efficiently served, a policy embraced by each of Pennsylvania's core partners.

Moreover, Pennsylvania has established a strong partnership between L&I and DHS by leveraging resources and improving outcomes for OSY through the TANF Youth Development Program, or YDP. This partnership encourages the network of state and local youth services providers, workforce development providers, and public housing agencies to develop workforce programs for needy and at-risk youth that provide employment, educational experiences, and essential skills such as financial literacy and time management. The agencies strongly encourage programs to co-enroll youth in TANF YDP and applicable WIOA programs, allowing individuals participating in TANF funded subsidized employment opportunities to benefit from additional services, such as occupational skills training and other relevant services. As TANF enrolled youth, the OSY can have access to the full complement of WIOA services. OSY who are found not eligible for WIOA programs are referred to the TANF YDP. All TANF YDP participants have access to a full complement of programs and services which include the 14 required program elements such as, Career Exposure, Entrepreneurial Skill Training, Adult Mentoring, Work Experience, Paid Internship Opportunities, Financial Literacy Education, and many more innovative programs.

In addition to the work being done at the state level, LWDBs are prioritizing the adoption of the following strategies to effectively serve their youth population:

- Recruitment and Outreach: Conduct activities, including outreach to local government facilities, non-profit, and faith-based organizations that provide support services to disconnected youth and young adults, including the use of word-of-mouth referrals and social media platforms.
- Other suggested activities for youth services provider staff include:
  - Visiting local parks, tattoo parlors, smoke shops, homeless shelters, and other places that disconnected young people visit, connecting with them one-on-one in that environment, and in terms that make them the most comfortable.

- Going into low-income communities and neighborhoods, knocking on doors, and speaking to friends, families, and young adults about available services and opportunities. Creating a program application process that is easy to complete by removing as many of the administrative hurdles as possible, such as the use of self-attestation.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT. [12]

Pennsylvania will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented at all of the PA CareerLink® One-Stop In-school-Youth (ISY) and OSY programs. These programs provide services to youth both within the PA CareerLink® offices, as well as through staff stationed throughout Pennsylvania's K-12 school districts. Services include GED prep, alternative secondary school services, skills training for in-demand occupations through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), labor market-based guidance on local career pathways, tours of local businesses, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills training, and other leadership development opportunities. Eligible youth in need are also offered comprehensive case management services including counseling, mentoring, supportive services, and follow-up support.

Youth are also provided with paid and unpaid work experiences that have both academic and occupational components which include summer employment opportunities, internships, job shadowing, and On-the-Job (OJT) training opportunities. The PA ATO works closely with LWDBs and PA CareerLink® offices from across the State to build awareness and knowledge around apprenticeships. In addition to regularly presenting Apprenticeship 101 webinars and providing additional resources to workforce staff, the ATO also supports the Registered Apprenticeship Navigator program, an apprenticeship program that trains people to start and manage apprenticeship programs. Additionally, continues to support the growth of the statewide Apprenticeship Ambassador Network through creating new or supporting existing local and/or regional apprenticeship ambassador networks designed to grow Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship in local areas. This growth encouragement include emphasis on partnering with PA CareerLink® with a concentration on training or supporting Title One staff or other workforce development professionals who act as Ambassadors of Apprenticeship and grow this work.

Through the ATO's outreach efforts, it encourages the workforce system to use WIOA funding to support Registered Apprenticeship and/or Pre-apprenticeship in multiple ways concentrating heavily in serving youth through the following avenues:

- Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) – ITAs can be used to fund the related technical instruction component of the RA for eligible apprentices through the Eligible Apprenticeship List housed within the ETPL.
  - ITAs can also fund pre-apprenticeship training if the sponsor is on the ETPL. A pre-apprenticeship is not just a youth program strategy but may also be an effective strategy for participants in the WIOA adult programs.
- On-the-Job Training (OJT) – Typically up to 50% of the apprentices' wages may be reimbursed by WIOA funds. Local areas can contract with RA programs where participants may participate in OJTs with multiple employers who are signatories to the RA program. In certain circumstances, the local board may determine that a contract

with a training provider is the most appropriate way to train a cohort of new apprentices for in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

- Customized Training – RA program sponsors and apprentices can be supported through customized training agreements for eligible instruction costs.
- Youth Occupational Skills Training and Work Experience – In the Title I Youth program, pre-apprenticeships are considered a type of work experience for youth age 16-24. The work experience program element also emphasizes training that aligns with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, which is a key component of RA programs.
- Supportive Services – WIOA funds can support a variety of supportive services for apprentices, including annual dues, registration fees, books, supplies, childcare, transportation, tools, and uniforms.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)- In appropriate circumstances, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA) represents another funding vehicle to support apprenticeship. All TAA participants are covered under what is called a TAA certification. This certification confirms that the employment of a worker group was impacted or threatened due to trade-related circumstances. Grants are provided to the states to provide services, which trade-affected workers access through the American Job Center Network. States also notify individuals of their eligibility.

Additionally, the ATO is taking steps to align the Career Pathways and Apprenticeship system more closely through forging strategic partnerships with Career & Technology Centers (CTC) statewide to see how their existing vocational programs can fit into the Registered Apprenticeship Ecosystem.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

Due to the uniqueness of Pennsylvania’s 23 Local Areas and the varying levels of resources available, LWDBs are each required to establish a definition, along with reasonable, quantifiable, and evidence-based eligibility documentation requirements for the “requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment” criterion if this “additional assistance” barrier category is to be utilized locally. To assist the Local Boards with policy development, L&I facilitated discussions during the Spring of 2017, that included state representatives from WIOA program partner agencies to assist local board representatives to develop recommendations on definitions and with interpretations of the term “requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment.” This policy was developed by each applicable LWDB and is articulated in each respective local board’s WIOA Local Plan.

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE “NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL” OR “ATTENDING SCHOOL,” INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

The commonwealth's Workforce System Guidance No. 03-2015, Youth Eligibility Definitions-Initial Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, December 23, 2015, provides definitions to ensure compliance with law and other federal guidance, expand the flexibility of Local Areas to expend funds appropriately, and eliminate barriers to the provision of services to individuals most in need.

Under WIOA, a key element of youth eligibility determination is whether the applicant is attending school or not attending school, as defined by State law. An ISY must be attending school, while an OSY must not be attending school. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania law does not define these terms, but the policy is guided by how the PA Department of Education defines schools. In Pennsylvania, providers of youth services must establish whether a youth is an ISY or OSY by utilizing the criteria outlined below:

- **Attending Any School:** Youth receiving services from any one of the 'public' or 'non-public' institutions to include: school districts; charter schools; cyber charter schools; area vocational technical schools; sectarian schools; and private schools, as well as those being home-schooled or privately tutored, would be considered "attending school" for the purpose of WIOA Title I-B youth eligibility determination. A youth enrolled at a post-secondary institution is considered "attending school," unless the youth is enrolled at the post-secondary institution as part of an integrated education and training program.
- **Not Attending Any School:** Youth not receiving services from any one of the 'public' or 'nonpublic' institutions listed above would be considered "not attending school" for the purpose of WIOA Title I-B youth eligibility determination.

For purposes of WIOA eligibility, L&I does not consider providers of adult education under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild programs, the Job Corps program, high school equivalency programs, or dropout reengagement programs to be schools. Therefore, in all cases except the one provided below, WIOA Youth programs may consider a youth to be an OSY for purposes of WIOA youth program eligibility if he or she attends adult education provided under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild, Job Corps, high school equivalency programs, or dropout re-engagement programs regardless of the funding source of those programs. Youth attending high school equivalency programs funded by the public K-12 school system who are classified by the school system as still enrolled in school are an exception; they are considered ISY. Youth must be categorized as OSY or ISY at the time of registration in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) which is the system of record for federal reporting.

**6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.**

Pennsylvania further defines basic skills deficient as a youth or adult who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society by using instruments that are considered valid and appropriate for the targeted population, and must provide reasonable accommodation in the assessment process, if necessary, for individuals with disabilities. When using standardized assessments, the administration will follow published guidelines, and locators/appraisals will be used to determine the appropriate level of use of such assessments. This assessment method must include reading, writing, or computing skills. Soft skills deficiency or occupation skills deficiency shall not be used to determine otherwise proficient individuals as basic skills

deficient. Local programs may use previous basic skills assessment results, if such previous assessments have been conducted within the past six months. Individuals with disabilities will be provided with reasonable accommodations in the assessment process. Individuals with Limited English Proficiency will be offered assessments designed to accommodate such persons.

Alternative assessment methods include employer statements, school records, lacks a high school diploma or high school equivalency and is not enrolled in post-secondary education, referrals or records from a Title II Adult Basic Education program, determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-documented observations, and/or referrals or records from an English Language Learner program.

Detailed case notes and other documents will provide an auditable trail back to the source of the verified information and how the basic skills determination was made. Youth 18 or older determined basic skills deficient for the WIOA Youth Program, may be co-enrolled in the Adult Program without an eligibility redetermination, and may be counted as an individual who meets Adult priority of service, if the original determination was made no more than 6 months prior to the date of co-enrollment.

#### D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

Not applicable

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

Not applicable

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

Not applicable

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

Not applicable

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

Not applicable



8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Not applicable

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

Pennsylvania does not intend to submit any waivers with its WIOA Combined State Plan Submission.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

#### ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	73.0%	73.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	71.0%	71.0%	72.0%	72.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$6,250.00	\$6,250.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%	67.0%	64.0%	68.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	40.0%	50.0%	41.0%	50.5%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

#### DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.0%	77.0%	78.0%	78.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	76.0%	77.0%	77.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,750.00	\$8,750.00
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	70.0%	68.0%	72.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.0%	44.0%	42.0%	46.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

#### YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	66.0%	66.0%	67.0%	67.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	65.0%	66.0%	66.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	58.0%	58.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

## PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

### A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

#### 1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Pennsylvania will continue to use state merit staff to provide labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act. Merit staff are co-located at all comprehensive American Job Centers (PA CareerLink®) and will to continue to work with workforce partners to ensure a seamless delivery of reemployment services to customers.

#### 2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Within Labor & Industry's Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO), Staff Development Services continues to develop, facilitate, and provide a training curriculum that strengthens the professional skills of staff in PA CareerLink® and LWDB offices. Staff Development Services also provides the curriculum to agency staff in headquarters and regional locations who provide workforce development program expertise, guidance, and support to the PA CareerLink® offices and Local Areas. The curriculum is designed, delivered, and evaluated to ensure staff from all partnering organizations acquire consistent information and practical skills to effectively provide integrated programs and services to jobseeker and business customers. In addition, Staff Development Services continues to assist the bureau's programmatic managers and staff in creating procedural and informational materials that promote accurate and consistent service delivery among PA CareerLink® offices.

#### 3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

Management staff from Labor & Industry's Office of Unemployment Compensation Benefits Policy meet with BWPO management staff on a regular basis to collaboratively identify and address Unemployment Insurance (UI) eligibility and other issues. The Re-Employment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program introduces UI claimants to the workforce development services available to them through PA CareerLink® offices while simultaneously

keeping Unemployment Compensation Service Centers informed of any potential issues with claimant UI eligibility. Labor & Industry monitors the number of cases being referred to UC Service Centers to ensure that PA CareerLink® staff are fulfilling this requirement.

**B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE**

Pennsylvania equips PA CareerLink® with staff and technology to assist customers with filing a UC claim. All sites have designated computers that allow for customers to file a new claim online, there are printers and email access for customers to exchange and provide information to the UC service centers. Additionally, there are trained staff that provide one-on-one assistance to customers who may need help with the online claim platform. An interactive desk guide is used by staff at all PA CareerLink® sites to ensure consistency across the state with the information provided; the desk guide uses Google translator as an added feature for customers with limited English Proficiency. Interpreter services are also available for customers that need additional assistance. Existing UC customers can file their biweekly claims at PA CareerLink® if they lack the technology or broadband capabilities from home.

Finally, every PA CareerLink® site has at least one Wagner-Peyser staff that has access to the UC mainframe database. These staff members have been trained to answer initial claims inquiries, check the status of a claim, and provide updates on benefit information.

**C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS**

Reemployment services are available to all UI claimants and other unemployed individuals through PA CareerLink® offices and PA CareerLink® Online. Information about reemployment services and instructions for enrollment are printed on the UI claim confirmation letter and in the Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation Handbook that is sent to every UI claimant. Additionally, this information is available online at the commonwealth's UC and Workforce Development websites. Pennsylvania UC law requires claimants to register for employment search services with PA CareerLink® Online within 30 days of filing for benefits. Beginning with the third week of the benefit year for which a compensation claim is filed and each week thereafter, claimants must apply for two positions; participate in one work search activity each week; and maintain records of their work search efforts.

**D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:**

As explained above, Pennsylvania UC law requires claimants to register for employment search services. When claimants apply for UC benefits they are immediately directed to PA CareerLink® Online to register for employment search services where occupational skills information is collected. The PA CareerLink® Online portal matches claimant skills with those required for jobs posted in CWDS to help satisfy job-search requirements. The system can also suggest training and education programs that may assist the individual to increase reemployment prospects. Claimant participation in reemployment services is tracked until exhaustion of UC benefits or termination of reemployment services.

In addition to PA CareerLink® services available to all unemployed jobseekers, Pennsylvania provides the federal Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment program (RESEA), a worker profiling/reemployment collaborative program to expedite reemployment services for

UI claimants while eliminating duplicative services. UC's database ranks claimants according to those most likely to exhaust UI benefits before returning to work. The ranking algorithm, based on common characteristics found in similar unemployed workers (e.g., employment history, educational levels), excludes claimants with a recall-to-work date, union affiliation, those involved in a work stoppage, and claimants who are working part-time. Collaboration among PA CareerLink® partners makes RESEA an effective means for UI claimants to obtain reemployment and training services across all service levels, including: orientations; job search planning, assistance, and workshops; labor market information; résumé preparation; program assessment; vocational and career guidance; testing; remedial or prerequisite training (e.g., Adult Basic Education, high school equivalency preparation, or ESL); and skills training. All RESEA customers receive an employment needs assessment and an Individual Employment Plan. Participation in RESEA is tracked through CWDS until exhaustion of UI benefits or termination of reemployment services.

All responses to this prompts are provided in d. 1.

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E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

Migrant and seasonal farm workers represent a unique population that travels from location to location seeking employment. In Pennsylvania most of the MSFWs who come here for work travel in small groups. They travel in groups because in most cases they do not have their own transportation, and a majority of them have limited English skills, which makes them dependent on crew leaders, farm labor contractors, or third-party individuals who can facilitate their communication needs. The term "migrant stream" refers to the flow and backflow of MSFWs. In Pennsylvania we are part of the East-Coast migrant stream. Florida tends to be the home base of these workers. The term "home base" refers to where the farm workers' families may reside year-round, and where the workers return to and continue working during the colder months when there is little and limited farm work here in Pennsylvania. The one overwhelming need of the majority of MSFWs who travel here in the East-Coast migrant stream is that they lack legal immigration status.

Workers who can take full advantage of our services do have unique needs. Many workers, as stated above, do not have their own transportation. From the very start, that limits their ability to take advantage of certain job opportunities that would otherwise avail themselves. Given that a worker has transportation or has transportation options, i.e., resides where public transportation is available, or has other means, then the job seeker may take full advantage of all the services we offer, and the services are equal to those of any non-MSFW, and employment opportunities may be accessed at any one of our one-stop centers or accessed electronically over the internet.

Another major need that MSFWs experience is housing. If the worker is planning on changing careers, then non-employer-provided housing will be necessary, and that is often a difficult transition. Most apartments require a deposit and a first month's rent payment. This may also include deposits for utilities. Farm work generally includes free housing, and in many cases the only expense a farm worker ever incurs is food for sustenance. In most instances farm workers, at the very least, are able to save large portions of their pay in anticipation of a better future, and this includes transitioning into their own housing.

Training sometimes comes later for MSFWs. Once they have worked in non-agricultural employment for a time they become, by definition, non-MSFWs. By the time they take advantage of training opportunities they are not counted as farm workers. Still, there are circumstances where a farm worker may have a plan and take advantage of our training opportunities. Every one-stop has an available apprenticeship program or a partner, including the NFJP partner, who can assist in providing employment training to MSFWs.

Sometimes as a "bridge" to employment training there are community resources that provide free English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to anyone in need. English language skills not only expand the choice of employment training for MSFWs but also enhances their opportunities for employment.

The Department of Agriculture, Department of Labor & Industry, and other relevant state agencies as necessary, will work together to ensure that the needs of agricultural workers and employers are met. As part of that collaboration, the two principal departments, L&I and PDA, will encourage agricultural employers to create multi-employer workforce partnerships and apply for funding through the Next Generation Sector Partnership program

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

Agriculture is one of Pennsylvania's leading industries, with diverse animal and crop production throughout the commonwealth. Pennsylvania ranks first in the nation in mushroom production, second in Christmas tree farms, fourth in apple production and fifth in terms of the number of dairy cows. Lancaster County is the top agricultural county in the state.

In Pennsylvania, the agriculture footprint is unique to certain geographical areas. The southeast part of the state produces 62 percent of the nation's mushrooms. The eastern part of the state has considerable blueberry and cherry production. Bucks, Montgomery, and Lancaster Counties are hubs for wholesale nursery production. Lancaster County leads the commonwealth in animal agriculture including dairy, poultry, and swine. The southcentral part of the state is considered the fruit belt with Adams and Franklin Counties leading in the production of apples, peaches, cherries, and pears. Bedford and Blair Counties also have numerous apple growers. Central Pennsylvania is the heart of the Christmas tree industry while northwestern

Pennsylvania leads a burgeoning wine industry that also has pockets throughout the commonwealth. Grapes, cherries, vegetables, and nursery production fills out production categories in the western part of the state.

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the five leading labor-intensive crops (where the most hired farm labor is employed) are Greenhouse, Nursery, and Floriculture Production (NAICS code 1114) (16,628 employed); Dairy Cattle and Milk Production (NAICS code 11212) (4,045); Other Crop Farming (NAICS code 1119) (6,818); Fruit and Tree Nut Farming (NAICS code 1113) (6,434); and Oilseed and Grain Farming (NAICS code 1111) (5,683). The commonwealth 61,071 workers in total employed as hired farm labor.

Counties that led in the employment of hired farm labor include

Further, using the Census, Chester (1,071); Adams (1,192); Franklin (453); Cumberland (207) York (234); Berks (158); Lancaster (161); are the top counties where the migrant workforce has been deployed.

The five leading crops where the migrant workforce is employed include Fruit and Tree Nut Farming (NAICS code 1113) (119); Dairy Cattle and Milk Production (NAICS code 11212) (90); Greenhouse, Nursery, and Floriculture Production (NAICS code 1114) (71); Vegetable and Melon Farming (NAICS code 1112) (43); and Oilseed and Grain Farming (NAICS code 1111) (29).

The agriculture community uses migrant farmworkers to supplement its local workforce. There is greater percentage of the workforce in some counties such as Adams and Franklin than there is in the larger agriculture counties such as Lancaster and Chester. There is also a higher percentage of workers in crops that are more seasonal, presumably helping with planting and harvest at key times.

Records related to the H-2A program confirm that assumption in that the busiest times for applications are from December to January with consistent activity continuing through June and July.

In general, employers in the agriculture and food industry express the need for more workers, particularly in the seasonal parts of the business. There is intense competition for low-skill, low-wage workers between the agriculture, retail, hospitality, health care, and other industries.

This overall scarcity of workers will be the factor which most dramatically affects the agriculture and food industry in the future. Housing and transportation as well as training for agriculture tasks as the work gets more sophisticated will be additional challenges. The industry itself is experimenting with technology that may allow machines to replace some of the manual labor that is currently required.



3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWs IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

Farm workers have “unique needs,” but specifically their needs are generally common to them as a group. In Pennsylvania the overwhelming majority of farm workers, which represent a percentage in the upper 90s, are Hispanic, and within that group of workers the greatest percentage by far comes from Mexico. Other countries of origin within that group are Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Outside this category, and representing combined single digit numbers, are workers from Jamaica, Haiti, Caribbean Island nations, the U.S. south, and occasionally workers from various Asian countries.

The most common language spoken by farm workers is Spanish, as Hispanic workers represent a large majority. Primarily the remaining groups of workers are so small in number that for them to obtain agricultural employment they must, and usually do, possess rudimentary English language skills at the very least. Besides Spanish, the next most commonly spoken language amongst farm workers is Haitian Creole.

During peak season it is estimated that the number of MSFWs (Currently H-2A workers are included as MSFWs in this number by regulation) in Pennsylvania are just under 10,000 in number. In the off-season, the low season, which is during the winter months, is under 1,000 workers statewide.

The PA Department of Labor & Industry, working with the PA Department of Agriculture, the National Agriculture Statistical Service of the US Department of Agriculture, PathStone (the WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee for the commonwealth), Penn Ag Industries, and other agriculture employer organizations and agriculture employers themselves, has assembled this profile of the MSFW's in Pennsylvania.

Just fewer than 4,300 farmworkers are employed annually with the peak months for employment in southcentral Pennsylvania from May through November and in southeastern Pennsylvania from September through April. These differences can be attributed to the differing needs of the mushroom and fruit industries. Of all farmworkers, 24 percent are seasonal, and 76 percent are migrants.

Labor & Industry recognizes that some farm workers possess specific needs and face certain barriers that result from cultural, educational, linguistic, scheduling, logistic and other dynamics. The Administration will continue to seek stakeholder and customer input and will engage Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) service providers to identify and address needs, explore solutions and collaborate to ensure quality living and working conditions.

Farm worker needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Timely Labor Market Information (LMI) to facilitate planning for continuous employment
- Occupational guidance and training to maintain a job or transition into a different occupation or industry
- Transportation to seek employment or supportive services
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Information from various jurisdictions on labor laws and worker rights, protections, and responsibilities
- Supportive services to enable MSFWs to obtain and maintain employment
- Fair and equitable conditions and supervision from trained and committed field foremen, supervisors, and farm labor contractors
- Fair and equitable pay that includes health benefits. This is a necessity for the laborers, as well as for the safety of our nation's food supply, and for reducing health and public assistance cost
- Pesticide and heat stress prevention training
- Barriers that at times confront farm workers include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Lack of timely, reliable data, and information pertinent to intrastate and interstate job openings and supportive services
  - Provider service delivery hours of operation that conflict with MSFWs work schedules
  - Lack of transportation, limiting access to jobs and supportive services
  - Underemployment or unemployment due to limited literacy education, and lack of non-agricultural job experience
  - Limited participation in support programs due to lack of understanding of eligibility and other factors, such as impact on immigration status for having utilized certain services;
  - Lack of full-time, year-round work, combined with low wages, that relegates MSFWs to living below the poverty line
  - Competition from undocumented workers who work for less pay and substandard living and working conditions
  - Competition from intrastate and interstate farm labor contractors who follow migrant streams accompanied by their own farm worker crews
  - Limited educational opportunities, including a lack of short-term, skilled-based training offered bilingually, for MSFWs; and

- Limited knowledge of job search techniques for finding employment outside of agriculture.

#### 4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The commonwealth projects just under 10,000 MSFWs for the coming year as estimated by WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees. This number remains static because similar crop activities are anticipated.

In PY 2020, PA CareerLink® centers estimate they will receive approximately 1,212 agricultural job openings and will refer applicants to approximately 85 percent of them. The offices estimate they will continue to receive approximately 165 clearance orders for the PY 2020 harvest season from other states and anticipate these to be primarily requests for H-2A workers.

Currently, every PA CareerLink® center in Pennsylvania has an employee, who may have other duties, designated as the “Agricultural Specialist.” That employee serves as a liaison to agriculture employers and the placement needs of MSFW. Agricultural Specialists will utilize, when feasible, the Agriculture Recruitment System to recruit and refer qualified MSFW to job openings. The commonwealth is considering reducing the number of staff designated as Agriculture Specialists and concentrating staff efforts to the areas with a high concentration of agriculture employment while ensuring all areas can be covered when needed. PA is currently in the process of revamping its MSFW outreach program.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) maintains open communication with various agencies, including various legal services and charitable organizations that all perform their own outreach to both MSFWs and H-2A workers, and refers farm workers to these agencies and organizations for services. The SMA also receives referrals from these agencies when farm workers are in need of CareerLink services. When needed, farm workers are directly contacted either by the SMA or by a local office or outreach worker.

SMAs no longer perform, by definition, any “outreach” activity, but do, however, perform “field visits.” The Commonwealth is not one of the 20 “significant” agricultural States and therefore has outreach coverage available year-round when needed, and full-time bilingual outreach staff, which perform outreach during peak season.

The PA Department of Labor & Industry outreach workers will be aware of training, development as well as technical assistance resources available to them. The Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) program is overseen by the L&I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO) with a dedicated staff to implement FLC requirements. BWPO will ensure outreach workers clearly understand the technical assistance resources available to them. Specific WIOA services available to MSFW and employers may vary locally, and therefore are catalogued and shared at a local level with area outreach workers.

Outreach workers will receive training and on-going technical assistance from the SMA. This includes directly taking any new outreach workers to the field to first observe outreach, and then, once proficiency and confidence is reached, to be observed performing outreach. Once an outreach worker displays competency in performing outreach, that individual will perform outreach alone, and report findings back to the SMA. When changes in outreach practices occur, the SMA will share that information. Generally, on an annual basis the SMA will accompany outreach workers to monitor and to assure that uniform outreach practices are observed.

Outreach workers will be trained by the SMA to take complaints from farm workers and to refer those complaints to the SMA for resolution. Outreach workers will be trained on wage complaints, workers' rights, apparent violations, other supportive service organizations, job search and referrals.

The PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) will incorporate a training plan into the outreach worker activities, to include training requirements such as PA CareerLink® 101, a two-day training that reviews the foundations of workforce development, including the WIOA core programs and other commonwealth initiatives, or similar workforce foundation training activities that meet the needs of the worker, such as webinars and staff symposiums. Unemployment activities are also under the purview of the L&I, Wagner-Peyser staff assigned as Agriculture Specialists in the PA CareerLink® are also trained to directly engage UI claimants in the one-stop with re-employment services and can provide assistance to individuals seeking to file and/or appeal UI claims. Agricultural Specialists are trained to understand and offer employment services, therefore domestic and MSFW jobseekers and workers are afforded universal access to employment services.

State MSFW outreach workers are merit staff and are trained individually and "as needed" by the SMA to thoroughly understand our mission and purpose of outreach, to understand the protocols of outreach, to be able to re-inspect labor camps, to identify any apparent violations, to have an on-going understanding of services available from the AJCs and from partner agencies, and to report any deficiencies, apparent violations, and complaints to the SMA for immediate follow-up/resolution. New outreach worker hires are then given hands-on training by first observing MSFW outreach, and then observed while performing outreach until proficiency has been reached.

Trainings will cover the reasoning behind these requirements to instill a comprehensive understand of the purpose of outreach based on 20 CFR regulations. Training will instruct workers step-by-step into outreach techniques: introduction, presentation, labor camp inspection—including bulletin board requirements, workers' rights, CareerLink contact referrals, services provided, job search and referrals, complaint and wage complaint overview, apprenticeship, and a listing of available partner agencies including PA Migrant Health, PathStone Corp., PA Migrant Education, charitable organization and legal service options.

Outreach workers will be trained to be able to serve agricultural employers by sharing a wealth of information with regard to keeping the employer in compliance with regard to regulations, how to access our website and place job orders into the system, and how to place Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) and H-2A orders into the system and the availability of our apprenticeship program.

The NFJP grantee in Pennsylvania is PathStone Corp. Each PathStone office serves as the focal point for outreach and recruitment to remote and less accessible areas of the state. In addition, PathStone Corp. is a Title I provider and/or PA CareerLink® partner in select locations across the commonwealth. The PA Department of Labor & Industry has established a budding working relationship with PathStone.

PathStone's local offices may co-enroll MSFWs (migrant and seasonal farm workers) and provide NFJP services to adult and youth MSFW populations, as well as provide other enhanced benefits, which may include career and training options. Co-enrollment, i.e., enrollment in both

PA CareerLink® and PathStone, may result in enhanced benefits, as both can provide OJTs (on-the-job-trainings), career planning and counseling, and job referrals. PathStone's local offices have bilingual staff and flexible, extended hours of service.

Meetings and discussions have led to BWPO outreach staff and support to begin attending Pathstone community outreach efforts. In addition, The PA Department of Labor & Industry, in partnership with the PA Department of Agriculture, will also work with Pathstone to identify areas for improvement, opportunities for collaboration. As a result, an outreach plan will be developed that addresses the needs of the MSFW population and agriculture employers.

To date our relationship with them has been on a fact-finding basis with the possibility of using their services to enhance our own statewide MSFW outreach coverage. More details will be considered as we proceed, and we expect to have more information in the near future.

#### 5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

As proposed, outreach to MSFW workers will be coordinated and implemented by the PA Department of Labor & Industry, its grantee and the PA CareerLink® staff. All findings, complaints, and apparent violations will be immediately reported to the State Monitor Advocate.

In the PA CareerLink® offices, according to conditions in 20 CFR 651.10, designated staff provide MSFWs with in-depth services including:

- Assistance in performing a job search on our automated system, and individual support if needed.
- Referrals to any and all employment listings that the applicant expresses interest in and is qualified for
- Information on training and supportive services
- Referral to partner agencies that assist MSFWs
- Testing, counseling, and job development services and/or referral to NFJP partner
- An explanation of basic farm worker rights and the complaint system
- Referral to local office complaint specialist if necessary

These services are provided regardless of a MSFW's ability to communicate in English (see available LEP services in other areas of this plan).

As proposed, outreach to MSFW workers and agriculture employers will be coordinated and implemented by the PA Department of Labor & Industry, its grantee and CareerLink® staff.

MSFWs receive a basic summary of their rights when they receive services in the PA CareerLink® or through outreach. Outreach workers shall explain to MSFWs at their working, living, or gathering areas services available from the PA CareerLink®, including the availability of employment referrals, training, supportive services, testing, counseling, and other job development service; types of specific employment opportunities available in the PA CareerLink®; information on the agriculture complaint system; information on other organizations serving MSFW, including PathStone. Outreach workers will encourage the MSFW to visit their local PA CareerLink® to access the full range of employment services. In the instance the MSFW cannot or will not visit the local PA CareerLink®, the worker can assist the MSFW in the preparation of applications, assistance in obtaining referral to employment opportunities currently available, as well as information regarding the type of employment opportunities which will become available; assistance in the preparation, receipt and referral of complaints; referral to supportive services; and transportation assistance to appointments at local PA CareerLink® offices or appropriate partners.

Outreach tools include printed material, flyers, cellular phone, business cards, and posters. Printed materials range from business cards, listings of services, provider agencies, worker rights, and topical information on everything from pesticides to heat stress.

Pennsylvania growers are offered the full range of PA CareerLink® services. Through the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), the PA CareerLink® centers help employers meet their needs for permanent, temporary, and/or seasonal labor by placing job postings in CWDS and by marketing openings to job seekers.

In addition to Pennsylvania's professional business services offered to all employers as outlined throughout the State Plan, agricultural employers are also offered our services when met in person on MSFW outreach, at agricultural meetings, and other business-related events.

Job posting requirements, as specified under federal regulations at 20 CFR 653, and housing standards, as specified at 20 CFR 654 and 29 CFR 1910.142, are complied with in the PA CareerLink® centers. Additional requirements, as outlined in ETA Manual No. 3398, which pertain to requests from employers for employing temporary alien agriculture workers under the H-2A Program, are also followed.

Along with these requirements, the Central Office staff conducts the Prevailing Wage and Prevailing Practice surveys where there is significant MSFW activity, and where there are requests for seasonal or temporary farm workers under the H-2A Program.

There are several points in the system where the employment service complaint system is publicized to MSFWs. Every PA CareerLink® prominently displays an ETA-approved employment service complaint system poster in each local office and satellite or district office. The posters are also made available in retail and service establishments frequented by MSFWs in communities that have a high concentration of farm workers. PathStone and Migrant Education, Migrant Health, and other agencies that serve the farm worker community," that are involved in the recruitment process are other outlets for providing information about the employment service complaint system as mandated by federal regulation at 20 CFR 653.112.

In Pennsylvania the Agricultural Recruitment System is in place to facilitate the hiring of U.S. workers from other states. Our Foreign Labor Certification unit (FLC) will assist employers who may need help in completing the application to place an order into the system. Any agricultural

employers who request assistance in finding workers will be made aware of all options which will include the placement of local job orders into our system, the Agricultural Recruitment System, and the H-2A System.

Although the Agriculture Recruitment System has been around for several decades it has hardly been used by growers to find workers, and its use, or lack thereof, is not unique to Pennsylvania. Growers frequently inquire about the ARS and about the H-2A program. In the end and invariably they choose the H-2A program over the ARS. The SWA consistently purveys information about the Agricultural Recruitment System and willingly works with employers who express interest.

Regarding our AJCs, agricultural employers rarely visit our offices. This may be due to the ease and availability to access our system electronically or to speak directly to one of our representatives by telephone. Also, currently there may be some reluctance due to the ongoing pandemic for in-person visits.

More visibility may be given to the Agricultural Recruitment System on our website to apprise the public of its availability, and the SWA agrees to inform agricultural employers of the availability of the ARS, and will facilitate employers throughout the application process, which includes advertising and follow-up throughout on the referral process.

## 6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

### A. COLLABORATION

The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) and the SWA have an ongoing mutual relationship in which open lines of communication have been established and continue. There are activities that the NFJP partner performs that parallel those of the SWA, e.g. OJTs, and other activities where they intersect. When services to MSFWs intersect, i.e., both the SWA and the NFJP partner can provide distinct services that enhance services to MSFWs, there is a type of synergy that takes place. The same holds true for any other public agency that serves MSFWs. With diminished funding, it would best serve MSFWs if all agencies could coordinate their services.

With regard to MSFW outreach, the SWA has explored and continues to explore the possibilities of outside agency outreach performed by the NFJP partner, and with other partner agencies. With last year's outreach being suspended due to the pandemic, and this year's high rate of incidence of infection as determined by the PA Dept. of Health, any details of possible outreach performed by or in conjunction with the NFJP partner, PathStone, have not been finalized.

PathStone, the NFJP partner, also has an ongoing M.O.U. with the State Monitor Advocate. This M.O.U. specifies ongoing, open communication, and dialog on how to mutually enhance services to MSFWs.

The SWA has hired bi-lingual staff to conduct outreach to MSFWs at their place of work. This outreach will be available at any time of the year but will be full-time dedicated outreach during peak agricultural season.

The SWA collaborates with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture on an annual basis to arrange for all H-2A guest worker labor camps to be inspected and to inform them of any apparent violations at either H-2A or MSFW labor camps.

## B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Copies of the AOP have always been sent to agencies and legal services in the state for comment. PA Migrant Health, PA Migrant Education, PathStone, Philadelphia Legal Services, and Friends of Farmworkers all receive copies for comment. We received the following comment from PathStone:

"I have had the opportunity to review the Agricultural Outreach Plan and while the plan lays out an accurate account of the outreach, recruitment and supportive services activities supported by the NFJP, I would be remiss if I did not offer comments on and an exception to the section that address the delivery of Career and Training services provided for Farmworkers as presented on pages 3, 14, 15 to name a few.

On page 3 of this year's combined state plan, both required and optional elements fails to cite NJFP. PA's Plan ensures that all Workforce Boards and One-Stop Career Centers serve all applicants, including MSFWs." While this may be true, the plan fails to include that Career and Training options are also available to eligible MSFW's and provided by Title I Section 167, the National Farmworker Jobs Program. MSFWs seeking these services should be made aware of this as a matter of customer choice.

The plan continues "Services including basic, individualized (training) and follow-up, will be provided as necessary. Individualized and training services, including co-enrollment options, will be provided through referral to on-site partner programs." Again, while NFJP is a WIOA mandated partner and in PA has a MOU with each of the local Workforce Development Boards, it operates outside the One Stop Career Centers. The plan as writing does not provide for, or discuss the enhanced benefits of co-enrollments with NFJP, a Title I resource designed and funded specifically for providing WIOA Career and Training services to both Adult and Farmworker Youth populations.

These omissions, do not reflect the career services and training functions of NFJP nor our non-traditional approach to service delivery to the FW population which includes but is not limited to extended hours of operations, and employment of staff who are linguistically and culturally competent.

Pathstone Corporation would ask that consideration be given to expanding the present plan to incorporate the aforementioned information regarding PathStone's NFJP Title I service capacity."

In response to this comment, Pennsylvania updated the prompt responses for e.4.E and e.5.A. to reflect PathStone's request for additional content and context.

## C. DATA ASSESSMENT



While the number of MSFWs has steadily decreased over the years, the numbers of services provided have remained proportionally the same, and all equity factors have been met. If there is a gray area in reporting it would be due to a waiver provided to the SWA by Region II going back a number of years, the SWA was exempt from capturing certain data by their data collection unit, and some of those numbers pertained to equity factors on the LEARS reporting system. This exemption was not unique to Pennsylvania. It had been agreed upon at the time that by using MSFW data from previous years' reports, patterns and trends in the data would emerge. The equity factors had always constantly been met over the years in Pennsylvania, and other MSFW data remained solid and stable. There had been no indication by the data that any trends would have changed over that time period.

The numbers of MSFWs had been steadily declining in the state. Then, due to Covid, and a shift of farm workers from migrant and seasonal to H-2A there has been a shift in the data. H-2A workers are on temporary work visas and cannot use the services of the AJCs. Also, during the last few years the numbers of MSFWs coming into the Commonwealth have plummeted. This shortage in workers made MSFWs a commodity. The workers no longer needed the job service to help them find work. They could practically show up at any farm and obtain employment on their own, and without assistance.

#### D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

There were numerous goals in the prior AOP. Some of the goals depended on extenuating circumstances to be met. Outreach continues to be an issue. A fair number of our remote AJCs are in rural areas that have more diffuse populations in their service area. But these rural one-stops are in areas where the leading industries are agricultural. While some of these agricultural employers work in poultry, dairy, or have machine crops such as corn or soybeans, which do not employ MSFWs, there is always a number of farms that do hire MSFWs. For workers at a local AJC to be trained to perform MSFW outreach or field checks (in the case of H-2A) the workers must first be qualified to take on such responsibilities. Outreach workers must be bilingual. To apprise Spanish speaking farm workers of their rights and of our services, the outreach worker must be certified by our civil service commission as being proficient in Spanish. Second, it must be in the JS employee's pre-acceptance job description that MSFW outreach is one of the required job duties. Even a bilingual employee could not be required to perform outreach unless contractually it was originally part of the job description. For that reason, the solution to qualify local office staff as MSFW outreach workers is to replace, through attrition, local office employees with bilingual employees who accept the duties of performing MSFW outreach. To simply increase staffing at these local offices is not a viable solution because in many instances there would only be a few agricultural employers to visit. To take on another full-time employee to perform MSFW outreach to two or three labor camps cannot justify another full-time position at these locations.

Filling openings as they arise with qualified individuals who accept the responsibilities of MSFW outreach is an ongoing process. It represents a commitment that over time will put Pennsylvania back into full compliance with all Federal regulations with regard to outreach.

In the meantime, we are exploring other options such as third-party outreach and virtual outreach. Third-party outreach is actually not a strong alternative. Outreach is a term that tends to be interpreted as having a single, homogenous meaning. "Outreach" at Migrant Health, for example, consists of performing a perfunctory physical exam, and can even involve testing (for Covid) and administering flu and pandemic vaccines. The only way that they, or any other third-party contractor, could perform outreach on our behalf would be for us to extensively train

these workers to become proficient in what we do. Even our own AJC employees would need training to perform outreach, but our employees already have the background and understanding of how the AJC system works. Some third-party contractors, the NFJP partner Pathstone, for example, hires temporary outreach workers on a seasonal basis, and because of the nature of the circumstances of temporary employment there is a high annual turnover rate. That means that training for these workers would have to be repeated frequently. Also, accountability of any third-party outreach would be difficult. Under the best of circumstances few MSFWs ever take advantage of our services. If a third-party contractor performed substandard MSFW outreach on our behalf—or performed only spotty outreach, it might not become apparent for an extended period of time.

Other options that we are exploring may involve a large portion of creativity. The term “virtual” outreach is being used by other states with regard to MSFW outreach. We need to explore this as a possibility to determine its value and merits as a potential alternative. The possibility of running ads on local Spanish-speaking radio stations can have a valuable positive effect. If our services and opportunities of the local one-stops were presented in that audio format, and contact information was supplied, then an even far-wider audience could be reached. These ads could be run predominantly through the peak agricultural season for the MSFW target audience, and also presented randomly throughout the year to serve both MSFWs and other Spanish speaking customers. A campaign of this nature would reach a far wider audience than just the MSFWs. It would be beneficial to any Spanish-speaking community. We are taking everything into consideration and exploring every possibility to enhance services to MSFWs.

The 5148 Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) statistical activities require little explanation. Although MSFW numbers are low due to extenuating circumstances, Pennsylvania consistently meets or exceeds U.S. DOL-ETA goals. All five “Equity Indicators,” i.e., referrals to jobs, staff assisted services, supportive services, career guidance, and job development contacts were met. That means that in each of the above categories MSFWs received equal or greater service than the general population. Regarding the seven “minimum service level indicators,” which are job placement, placed at \$0.50 above the minimum wage, placed in long term non-agricultural job, reviews of significant offices, field checks conducted, outreach contacts per staff day worked, and timely process of ES complaints, all service levels consistently met or surpassed U.S. DOL-ETA goals for the year.

#### E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

Pennsylvania’s State Monitor Advocate consulted in the development of the Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) Section of the Pennsylvania Combined State Plan and approved of its contents.

#### WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	Yes

#### WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$6,250.00	\$6,250.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

## PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

### A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

The content standards for adult education are currently in full alignment with state-adopted challenging academic contents standards. The Pennsylvania State Board of Education adopted the *Pennsylvania Core Standards* in November 2013. The standards went into effect March 1, 2014. PDE, Division of Adult Education began formal statewide implementation of the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education* (CCRS) during PY 2014-15. Prior to implementation of the CCRS, Division of Adult Education staff completed a crosswalk of the CCRS to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. All items included in the CCRS are also in the *Pennsylvania Core Standards*; in many cases, the wording of the standards is identical.

PDE, Division of Adult Education implemented the use of CCRS in Title II programs over a three-year period. The CCRS now serves as the foundation for instruction in all Title II programs, including English language acquisition programs. For PY 2020-21 and beyond, adult education programs will continue to align all instruction to the CCRS. The two foci for PY 2020-21 through PY 2023-24 will be peer observation and curriculum alignment. Programs have started to use the peer observation process to help them improve and strengthen individual lessons. New national training in CCRS will focus on curriculum alignment. Teams of instructors will pilot this process during this time period.

### B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

#### ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

Section 231 Adult Basic Education Direct Service grants that were awarded through PDE’s first competition under WIOA are in effect through June 30, 2022. In 2022, PDE, Division of Adult Education will conduct a full and open competition for a five-year grant cycle for Title II Section 231 funds for grants to be awarded July 1, 2022. The content of the section 231 grant applications will address, at a minimum, the thirteen considerations and seven requirements established in Title II. Eligible providers will be required to demonstrate clear alignment of proposed activities and services to the strategies and goals of the local workforce development plans for the areas to be served. The competition will be conducted through PDE’s eGrants system.

The competition will be open to all eligible providers. All applicants will be required to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the application be reviewed and considered for funding. To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants that have been funded under Title II AEFLA, as amended by WIOA, or state matching funds through PDE Division of Adult Education in the three program years immediately preceding the competition will be required to provide performance data under WIOA section 116 from those years. Applicants that were not previously funded by the Division of Adult Education under Title II AEFLA, as amended by WIOA, will be required to provide performance data that show their past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving

outcomes in comparable measures. For both groups, these measures include effectiveness in helping students develop their academic skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition, achieve high school equivalency, and transition into employment and/or postsecondary education/training.

As part of the application review process, Local Boards will review applications for alignment with the Local Plan following a standardized process developed by PDE, Division of Adult Education. Eligible providers will submit their applications to PDE, Division of Adult Education through the eGrants system. Once the review of applicant eligibility is completed, the division will distribute the applications to the appropriate local workforce boards for review. The division will establish a timeline for the review process and provide a review rubric to all Local Boards, which will include a section in which Local Boards can provide recommendations to improve alignment of proposed Title II services with the Local Plans. PDE will take the recommendations and results of the review into consideration when making decisions regarding grant awards and conditions.

Grants funds will be allocated to successful applicants through annual funding notifications contingent on the availability of federal and state funds. Each year's grant amounts and conditions will be based on the following criteria: contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services; evidence of sufficient progress in meeting the state-imposed targets for the agency performance outcome measures; evidence of continuous program improvement; compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and the amount of state and federal awards. All funds will be used in compliance with the supplement not supplant stipulation of the law.

Prior to the competition, PDE will use a needs-based funding formula to distribute funds to the local workforce areas. The formula includes six data sets weighted equally: the number of individuals age 18 and over who are not enrolled in school and who do not have a high school diploma; the number of individuals age 16 and over who are in the labor force and are unemployed; the number of individuals age 18 and over with less than a ninth grade education; the number of people below poverty level; the number of OJT openings per year; and the land area in square miles of the local workforce areas. In local areas comprised of multiple counties, PDE will further break out funding by county to ensure services are available throughout the area.

All adult education programs funded under Section 231 are required to be full-service adult education programs. They must provide year-round classroom instruction at adult basic education (ABE) educational functioning levels (EFL) 1-6 including high school equivalency test preparation as needed. In counties with sufficient need as determined by the Division of Adult Education, adult education programs must also provide year-round classroom-based English language acquisition (ELA) activities, including instruction that supports English language learners to transition successfully to ABE instruction within the programming funded by the grant and to earn a high school equivalency credential, if needed. Programs serving counties not determined by the division to require ELA activities may provide ELA activities as needed. In addition to ELA activities, programs may offer integrated English literacy and civics education (IELCE) activities where there is a need. Programs must provide supplemental distance learning opportunities to students participating in real-time, face-to-face instruction, either in person or remotely. Programs must also prepare students for and support them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education/training or employment. Programs will be allowed to provide workplace literacy activities as appropriate. Family literacy activities will be supported with state funds.

Programs will integrate digital literacy, employability skills, and workforce preparation activities into services. Basic skills instruction will incorporate activities that require the use of technology, promote critical thinking, and build self-management skills, such as utilizing resources and information, understanding systems, and working with others. Programs will

have an intake and orientation process that helps students and staff determine an individual's readiness for participation in the program. This includes activities to help the individual assess their schedule and potential barriers to successful participation in instruction. It also includes a discussion of the individual's reasons and goals for participation. Programs must have attendance and other policies that are consistently enforced to help students develop the self-management skills to persist in services, with the goal that those skills will transfer to employment and postsecondary education situations. All programs will integrate career awareness and career planning activities into the services provided to students, including using those activities as the context for basic skills instruction. Programs must have at least one case manager who works with students to address barriers to participation and to plan and prepare for transition to postsecondary education and/or training. Case management activities in support of transition will be offered in a variety of ways: integrated into instruction, stand-alone group activities, and one-on-one case management support. The activities will include introducing students to and helping them use the resources available through L&I and the PA CareerLink®; helping students identify employment and career pathways that align with their skills and interests and also lead to jobs that pay; and supporting students through the application process for employment or training. Case managers will help students identify and address potential barriers to successful transition, such as child care, transportation, and funding to pay for training, among others. Case managers will work closely with staff at the local PA CareerLink® site and refer students to PA CareerLink® career services as appropriate. Case managers will also coordinate with TANF, Title I, and Title IV career counselors to support co-enrollment.

When and where appropriate, programs will be encouraged to develop integrated education and training activities that provide adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and that is for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Integrated education and training activities will support the needs of the local labor market and will be developed in consultation with Local Boards, employers, and training providers. The occupational training provided as part of an integrated education and training activity will be connected to realistic, existing employment opportunities in the local area and provide an "on ramp" to a career pathway for the participants. The commonwealth will develop policy and guidance further clarifying allowable and required activities in an integrated education and training program. In addition, the commonwealth will research funding opportunities to cover the costs of the occupational training whenever possible.

#### C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

PDE, Division of Adult Education will compete funds for services under Section 225 as part of the overall application for Section 231 funds. Eligible providers submitting applications under Section 231 will have the option to include corrections education under Section 225 as part of the services to be provided. Thus, Section 225 funds will be included in the multi-year grants for Title II direct service funds where there is a local need. All aspects of the grant competition as described in sections III.b.5.B.i and ii and Title II Local Activities of the State Plan apply to Section 225 funds. The competition will be open to all eligible providers. PDE has policies, procedures, and guidelines in place to ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equal access to apply and compete for funds. The notice of availability of funds is first published through the Pennsylvania Bulletin, the commonwealth's official gazette for information and rulemaking. Once the notice is published, all grant information is posted to the PDE website on the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage, which is accessible to the public. The division creates a grant competition information video with closed captions, which is available to the public on YouTube. Policies established by PDE's Communications Office ensure the accessibility of all grant-related documents that are posted to the website. PDE will conduct the grant competition through its eGrants system. Through this system all eligible providers have access to the same grant application for funds, including Section 225 funds. The

applications in which Section 225 funds are included will address the seven requirements and thirteen considerations. All applications will be reviewed by teams of at least three using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The rubric will include special consideration to eligible providers that prioritize corrections education services to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. As appropriate, PDE will include individuals with knowledge of corrections education on application review teams.

Through the competition, PDE will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider offering corrections education services in the state. Entities funded to provide corrections education will provide at least one of the allowable activities listed in section 225 and will be required to ensure that priority of service is given to those individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

#### D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

PDE holds a separate competition for funds to establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Section 243 IELCE grants that were awarded through PDE's first competition under WIOA ended June 30, 2020. PDE Division of Adult Education held its second full and open competition for Section 243 IELCE grants in early 2020 and awarded grants for July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023. The content of the grant application addressed the seven requirements and thirteen considerations identified in WIOA with an emphasis on those that most directly address the goals of section 243, including the extent to which the proposed activities are responsive to regional needs and align with the strategies and goals identified in the local plans. Applicants had to provide extensive data to demonstrate the need for and potential for success of the proposed IELCE program and the affiliated integrated education and training (IET) program in the proposed service area. Such data included immigration trends, demographics of the English language learners in the proposed service area, and employment and labor market statistics showing sufficient employment opportunities for students who complete the program. Applicants had to provide evidence of partnerships that support the purpose of the program, including commitment from a training provider for the occupational training component of the IET. Applicants had to provide evidence of communication with and input from social service organizations serving the target population, the local workforce board, and local businesses/employers in identifying the need for the IELCE program and related IET. Applicants had to provide evidence that the occupational training component of the proposed IET is in an in-demand industry, has the potential to lead to economic self-sufficiency, is part of a career pathway, and will be provided by qualified providers.

PDE did not determine specific grant amounts or allocate funds to specific areas. Applicants proposed funding amounts that they deemed necessary to provide a compliant program to their proposed number of IELCE-activity participants and IET program participants. During the post-award grant contract review and approval process, PDE staff discussed the proposed grant amounts and participant numbers with the successful applicants to ensure that the final grant award amounts were appropriate. Grant amounts and conditions for the second and third years of the grant cycle are based on the following criteria: contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services; evidence of sufficient progress in helping students improve English language skills and successfully enroll in the associated IET; evidence of continuous program improvement; compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and the availability of funds determined by the amount of the federal award.

Successful applicants must use funds awarded under section 243 to provide a continuum of year-round, leveled, managed enrollment IELCE activities, including instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, that assist English language learners to acquire the reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills necessary to transition successfully

to the integrated education and training activity (IET) and to earn a high school equivalency credential, if needed. Programs must provide services to help students identify education and career goals and develop employability skills and must connect students to other services within the workforce system to meet those goals. All section 243 IELCE grantees must provide an IET as part of the program, and the IELCE activities must align with the content of the IET. Grantees must use section 243 funds to provide the adult literacy and education activities and workplace preparation activities of the IET programs. Grantees also use section 243 funds for the ongoing planning and development activities necessary to ensure a high-quality impactful IET. PDE encourages grantees to use outside funding opportunities to cover the costs of the occupational training component of the IET; however, use of Section 243 funds for such training and associated necessary costs is allowable. PDE did not mandate a specific model for Section 243 programs. Successful applicants proposed models that ensure provision of all required components in compliance with WIOA regulations. In cases in which the grant recipient does not provide all components itself, it is responsible for ensuring full integration of all activities.

PDE required successful applicants to submit additional documentation to PDE to ensure that the activities supported by the grants met all requirements. Successful applicants had to submit a completed Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Checklist and a completed Integrated Education and Training Checklist in order for the grant agreement to be fully approved. Grantees must submit to and have approved by PDE an Integrated Education and Training Proposal before they can conduct the IET. Projects funded with state leadership funds (see the next section) provide technical assistance to IELCE grantees as they develop their curricula to ensure that IELCE activities align with and prepare students for the IET activity and to ensure full integration of components in both IELCE and IET activities. State leadership projects also support grantees to make connections and integrate with partners in the local workforce development system to carry out the IELCE program activities.

As part of the grant application process, all applicants had to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the application be reviewed and considered for funding. To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants that had been funded under Title II AEFLA, as amended by WIOA, and/or state matching funds through PDE Division of Adult Education in the program years immediately preceding the competition were required to provide performance data under WIOA section 116 from those years. Applicants that were not previously funded by the Division of Adult Education under Title II AEFLA, as amended by WIOA, were required to provide performance data to show their past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving outcomes in comparable measures. For both groups, the measures included effectiveness in helping individuals develop their reading, math, or English language skills as demonstrated by level completion, achieve high school equivalency, and transition into employment and/or postsecondary education/training. While all of these measures were considered as evidence of demonstrated effectiveness, those related to demonstrated effectiveness in improving English language skills of English language learners were given the greatest weight.

Through a standardized process developed by PDE Division of Adult Education, local workforce development boards reviewed section 243 IELCE grant applications for alignment with the local plan. Eligible providers submitted their applications to PDE through the eGrants system. Once the review of applicant eligibility was completed, the division distributed the eligible applications to the appropriate local workforce boards for review. The division established a timeline for the review process and provided a review/scoring rubric to all local boards, which included a section in which local boards could provide recommendations to improve alignment of proposed IELCE programs with the local plans. PDE took the recommendations and results of the review into consideration when making decisions regarding grant awards and conditions.

PDE has policies, procedures, and guidelines in place to ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equal access to apply and compete for section 243 funds. The notice of availability of



funds was first published through the Pennsylvania Bulletin, the commonwealth's official gazette for information and rulemaking. After the notice was published, all grant information was posted to the PDE website on the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage, which is accessible to the public. Policies established by PDE's Communications Office ensure the accessibility of all grant-related documents that are posted to the website. The division created a grant competition information video with closed captions, which was available to the public on YouTube. PDE conducted the grant competition through its eGrants system. Through this system all eligible providers had access to the same grant application. A PDF of the content of the grant, including the content of Help Buttons, was posted on the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage, so that all interested parties could review it prior to accessing eGrants.

In accordance with PDE grant guidelines, grant applications were reviewed and scored by teams of at least three individuals. Team members included staff from the Division of Adult Education and peer reviewers. Division staff created a scoring rubric specific to the section 243 IELCE grant application and trained review team members prior to beginning review and scoring of applications. Once the applications were reviewed and scored, they were ranked from highest to lowest scoring. PDE awarded grants to the highest scoring applicant and continued to award funds until all applications that met the minimum score were funded.

#### E. STATE LEADERSHIP

##### 1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

The overarching goal of PDE's investment of state leadership funds is to support a system of professional development and technical assistance to ensure a high-quality Adult Basic Education system that aligns with the goals of the state, regional, and local workforce development plans to meet the needs of workers and employers in the commonwealth. The system emphasizes program improvement based on data and high-quality research-based technical assistance and professional development opportunities that promote such program improvement.

PDE funds a project that provides technical assistance and support to Title II programs to be effective partners in the workforce development system. The work focuses on the required activities: align adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and with one-stop partners, as appropriate, to implement strategies in the State Plan; participation in the development of career pathways that provide access to employment and training for individuals in adult education programs; and understanding and fulfilling Title II's role as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services. A second project further supports alignment of adult education and literacy activities with the workforce system by supporting the permissible activities of developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways; and promoting linkages with employers to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities and integration of adult education and literacy activities into occupational training.

PDE supports the use of technology to disseminate information about models and promising practices for instruction, staff development, and program improvement; instructional and programmatic practices based on rigorous and scientifically valid research; and other information relevant to high-quality adult education and literacy services. PDE also funds a project to provide technical assistance to eligible providers on the use of technology to improve system efficiencies and provide staff training, as well as on the integration of technology into instruction to promote learning and digital literacy.

PDE funds several activities that, together, comprise a high-quality professional development system that identifies and provides training in the following: instruction in areas such as

reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and English language acquisition; use of data for program monitoring and evaluation for continuous program improvement; training for volunteer instructors; and development of lesson plans, resources and curricula that align with the CCRS.

PDE will ensure that procurement of both required and permissible state leadership activities complies with state procurement policy. PDE anticipates using a combination of contractual tools, including both grants and purchase of services.

The quality of Pennsylvania's state leadership and professional development activities will be assessed using both formal and informal methods of evaluation. These evaluations will be completed by participants in the activities, by the providers of professional development and technical assistance (referred to collectively as the professional development system, PDS), and by PDE staff. The goal of evaluation is to support continuous improvement of these professional development activities and to improve instructional practices.

Local program staff will evaluate and provide feedback through several means. Participants will complete evaluations at the end of every formal professional learning opportunity. The evaluations will follow a standard format that includes questions about participant satisfaction and impact on practice, as well as open-ended questions seeking suggestions for improvement. Local program staff across the state will be invited to participate in the annual formal needs assessment conducted by the PDS. In addition to these formal methods, local program staff will provide feedback via their interactions with the PDS during the consultant meetings held at individual agencies and in the monthly Agency Professional Development Team Webinars. While the main purpose of these meetings is to support the programs' progress in implementing skills and knowledge from professional development and assist agencies in completing improvement at their programs, the discussions also help the PDS and PDE to determine if the professional development and technical assistance activities are helping to improve the use of new knowledge and skills by instructors and are positively impacting student outcomes.

In addition to input from local program staff, PDE has several tools available to directly evaluate the work of the projects funded to provide professional development and technical assistance activities. All projects will submit quarterly and final reports, which will provide evidence of progress toward and achievement of the goals specified in their grant narratives. Evidence will include both quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, each project will write a program improvement/professional development plan similar to that required of local programs. In the first grant year, each project will identify professional development activities for project staff that support the goals and objectives of the project. In subsequent grant years, each project will examine its prior year quarterly and final reports and submit an improvement plan that includes areas of focus and a description of the professional development in which project staff will participate to meet their program improvement goals. At the end of each year, the projects will submit to PDE an evaluation with appropriate documentation of whether they met their goals for the year. PDE staff will also use its weekly meetings with the leaders of each funded project to monitor and evaluate work.

During the period of this State Plan, PDE Division of Adult Education hopes to evaluate the impact of state leadership activities provided by the PDS on teacher practice and ultimately student outcomes. The development and implementation of the evaluation will build on the knowledge and skills that division staff developed through participation in the National Reporting System Institute: Evaluation Learning Community in 2019-2020.

## **2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE**

The overarching goal of PDE's investment of state leadership funds is to support a system of professional development and technical assistance to ensure a high-quality Adult Basic

Education system that aligns with the goals of the state, regional, and local workforce development plans to meet the needs of workers and employers in the commonwealth. The system emphasizes program improvement based on data and high-quality research-based technical assistance and professional development opportunities that promote such program improvement.

PDE funds a project that provides technical assistance and support to Title II programs to be effective partners in the workforce development system. The work focuses on the required activities: align adult literacy activities with other core programs and with one-stop partners, as appropriate, to implement strategies in the State Plan; participation in the development of career pathways that provide access to employment and training for individuals in adult education programs; and understanding and fulfilling Title II's role as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education and training services. A second project further supports alignment of adult education and literacy activities with the workforce system by supporting permissible activities such as developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways; and promoting linkages with employers to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities and integration of adult education and literacy activities into occupational training.

PDE supports the use of technology to disseminate information about models and promising practices for instruction, staff development, and program improvement; instructional and programmatic practices based on rigorous and scientifically valid research; and other information relevant to high-quality adult education and literacy services. PDE also funds a project to provide technical assistance to eligible providers on the use of technology to improve system efficiencies and provide staff training, as well as on the integration of technology into instruction to promote learning and digital literacy.

PDE funds several activities that, together, comprise a high-quality professional development system that identifies and provides training in the following: instruction in areas such as reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and English language acquisition; use of data for program monitoring and evaluation for continuous program improvement; training for volunteer instructors; and development of lesson plans, resources and curricula that align with the CCRS.

PDE will ensure that procurement of both required and permissible state leadership activities complies with state procurement policy. PDE anticipates using a combination of contractual tools, including both grants and purchase of services.

The quality of Pennsylvania's state leadership and professional development activities will be assessed using both formal and informal methods of evaluation. These evaluations will be completed by participants in the activities, by the providers of professional development and technical assistance (referred to collectively as the professional development system, PDS), and by PDE staff. The goal of evaluation is to support continuous improvement of these professional development activities and to improve instructional practices.

Local program staff will evaluate and provide feedback through several means. Participants will complete evaluations at the end of every formal professional learning opportunity. The evaluations will follow a standard format that includes questions about participant satisfaction and impact on practice, as well as open-ended questions seeking suggestions for improvement. Local program staff across the state will be invited to participate in the annual formal needs assessment conducted by the PDS. In addition to these formal methods, local program staff will provide feedback via their interactions with the PDS during the consultant meetings held at individual agencies and in the monthly Agency Professional Development Team Webinars. While the main purpose of these meetings is to support the programs' progress in implementing skills and knowledge from professional development and assist agencies in completing improvement at their programs, the discussions also help the PDS and PDE to determine if the

professional development and technical assistance activities are helping to improve the use of new knowledge and skills by instructors and are positively impacting student outcomes.

In addition to input from local program staff, PDE has several tools available to directly evaluate the work of the projects funded to provide professional development and technical assistance activities. All projects will submit quarterly and final reports, which will provide evidence of progress toward and achievement of the goals specified in their grant narratives. Evidence will include both quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, each project will write a program improvement/professional development plan similar to that required of local programs. In the first grant year, each project will identify professional development activities for project staff that support the goals and objectives of the project. In subsequent grant years, each project will examine its prior year quarterly and final reports and submit an improvement plan that includes areas of focus and a description of the professional development in which project staff will participate to meet their program improvement goals. At the end of each year, the projects will submit to PDE an evaluation with appropriate documentation of whether they met their goals for the year. PDE staff will also use its weekly meetings with the leaders of each funded project to monitor and evaluate work.

During the period of this combined state plan, PDE Division of Adult Education hopes to evaluate the impact of state leadership activities provided by the PDS on teacher practice and ultimately student outcomes. The development and implementation of the evaluation will build on the knowledge and skills that division staff developed through participation in the National Reporting System Institute: Evaluation Learning Community in 2019-2020.

#### F. ASSESSING QUALITY

PDE, Division of Adult Education will establish agency performance outcome measures and targets for monitoring, assessment, and evaluation of local programs. The agency performance measures will encompass those outcomes on which adult education and literacy activities have the greatest and most direct impact: educational functioning level gain, attainment of a high school equivalency credential, and transition to postsecondary education or training. In addition, the division will establish targets for employment in the second quarter after exit and median earnings in the second quarter after exit. Further, the division will apply an additional performance measure: the number of outcomes achieved per student; the outcomes are those addressed in the agency performance measures: educational functioning level gain; employment in the second quarter after exit, attainment of a high school equivalency credential, and transition to postsecondary education or training. The numerator for this performance measure is the unduplicated number of successful outcomes an agency has for all of its enrolled students. The denominator is the unduplicated number of enrolled students in the agency.

The Division of Adult Education will conduct formal ongoing monitoring, assessment, and evaluation of local programs through both desk monitoring and comprehensive monitoring reviews, which are conducted either in person or virtually. Division advisors will keep track of agency progress toward key markers of performance, such as contracted enrollment, appropriate assessment, employment outcomes and student persistence, using a range of tools. When data show areas for concern, advisors will contact the local program administrators to discuss the concerns and provide guidance and technical assistance. After the end of the program year, advisors will contact each agency individually to discuss its performance, focusing on areas in which the program has shown progress and areas in which it must improve.

In addition to this ongoing desk monitoring, division staff will conduct comprehensive monitoring reviews. Every year, the division will use a risk rubric to determine which agencies to monitor. Agencies with the highest scores will be selected for comprehensive monitoring reviews. These reviews will be conducted by teams of two, four, or six people. Each review will be guided by a monitoring tool to ensure standardization of the reviews. Monitoring reviews

will include an initial meeting with the administrator of the adult education program; class observations; student focus groups; staff focus groups; a review of data and student records; program compliance review; fiscal review; and a meeting at the end of the review for the presentation of noteworthy practices, findings with required actions, and recommendations.

After the monitoring review, the division will send a written monitoring report to the agency explaining all of the noteworthy practices, findings with required actions, and recommendations. The agency will submit a corrective action plan (CAP), which must address all findings with required actions, at a minimum. Agencies will be strongly encouraged to address recommendations as well. The regional advisors will be available to provide technical assistance during the development of the CAP and during implementation of the approved actions for correction and improvement. In addition, programs will be referred to the services of state leadership-sponsored activities where appropriate. The program will be required to provide updates on progress and documentation/evidence of completed actions. When necessary, the regional advisor will conduct a follow up review approximately six months after the CAP is submitted.

The state office will also conduct ongoing informal evaluation for the purpose of technical assistance and continuous program improvement. Topics will be determined based on the results of future assessment and evaluation.

Local programs will also be supported by state office staff and state leadership activities to engage in required, ongoing self-monitoring, assessment, and evaluation. Each program year, they will be required to develop a program improvement/professional development plan based on data and aligned with state office goals. They will be provided with tools similar to those used by the state office staff to track their own progress toward key markers of performance.

#### ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

**ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES**

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

**AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE**

<b>APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>Enter information in this column</b>
Applicant's Organization	Pennsylvania Department of Education
<b>PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE</b>	<b>Enter information in this column</b>
First Name	Pedro
Last Name	Rivera
Title	Secretary of Education, PA

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Email	parivera@pa.gov

#### SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

As the eligible agency responsible for administering and supervising policy for activities and services under *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act*, Title II of WIOA, PDE takes steps to ensure equitable access to and participation in the Title II adult basic education programs funded with AEFLA funds.

In the application for Title II funds, eligible providers must include a description of the steps they will take to ensure equitable access to and participation in the federally assisted adult education program. Successful applicants enter into grant contracts with PDE, which include the PDE Master Standard Terms and Conditions. The PDE Master Standard Terms and Conditions include multiple requirements for grantees to adhere to all federal and state regulations related to the funding. They also specifically cite Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, as well as The Americans with Disabilities Act.

PDE, Division of Adult Education has a Safety, Security, and Accessibility policy. As part of comprehensive monitoring reviews, division staff check for the accessibility of service sites and for the availability of resources and tools to help program participants address learning differences.

To ensure direct and equitable access to federal funds administered through PDE, Division of Adult Education, the division holds a full and open competitive grant application process. The notice of availability of funds is published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, which is available to the public with no limitations. All documents related to the competition are 508 compliant and are posted to the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage, which is available to the public. Division staff ensure that all interested applicants have access to the eGrants system and will waive the requirement to submit the application through the eGrants system for applicants that can demonstrate extraordinary circumstances impacting the applicant's ability to access the eGrants system.

Contracts for services provided with administrative funds are procured following Commonwealth of Pennsylvania procurement policies and procedures, which ensure equitable access to bid on opportunities. The commonwealth has a program in place to support access to contracts for small diverse businesses.

#### ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	47.0	47.0	47.0	47.5
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	5,450	5,450	5,450	5,500
Credential	37.0	37.0	37.0	37.2

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0	35.0	36.0	36.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

## PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

### A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) used the following sources to develop its recommendations to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR):

1. the PaRC annual report (Program Year (PY) 2018 – 2019, 2019-2020)
2. OVR Customer Satisfaction Surveys (redacted and provided by OVR)
3. review of items in the 2018 State Plan Input of State Rehabilitation Council
4. comments received at the 2018 and 2019 State Plan Public Meetings; various meetings with OVR liaisons to discuss and prepare input into the 2020-2023 plan.
5. participation in the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Monitoring (August 2019)
6. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) PY 2016 - 2018 OVR/Institute on Disabilities at Temple University
7. local Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) meetings and/or minutes (provided by OVR); and
8. quarterly reports received from OVR at PaRC Council meetings.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

**Commendation: The Council supports OVR in their efforts to open the order of selection as soon as possible for the benefit of Pennsylvanians with disabilities seeking employment services through OVR.**



## **1. The Closure of the Order of Selection (OOS) for All Categories**

**Issue:** The closure of the Order of Selection (OOS) for all categories represents a significant challenge to people with disabilities having access to employment services when they are needed. OVR must develop appropriate internal controls and other adjustments in order to re-open the OOS as soon as possible and update the PaRC regarding progress on at least a quarterly basis.

### **Recommendations/Measurable goals:**

1. OVR provides quarterly reports (at a minimum) to the PaRC on how many people were added to and removed from the waiting list in each category each quarter.

**OVR Response:** OVR will provide quarterly reports to the PaRC during the quarterly council meetings to address how many people were added to and removed from the OOS waiting list in each category per quarter.

2. OVR provides quarterly reports (at a minimum) to the PaRC and the State VR Board on new application response times.

**OVR Response:** Per RSA Monitoring Report (Nov. 2020) and agency planned corrective action steps, OVR will update existing policies and procedures to ensure that the eligibility determination timeline commences at the time of application. OVR will offer alternative methods of referral to enhance the referral experience for stakeholders. OVR shall provide updated policy and procedures to RSA for review. OVR staff will receive future training related to these changes and the PaRC will be updated on progress on a quarterly basis.

3. OVR establishes a clear deadline for reopening the OOS with intermediate steps and goals to re-open the OOS on time. OVR provides quarterly reports (at a minimum) to the PaRC on progress and factors affecting progress toward achieving the goal of re-opening the OOS on a permanent basis by the deadline.

**OVR Response:** The goal of OVR is to open the OOS as soon as possible. RSA has approved OVR to review and evaluate the ability to open the OOS on a quarterly basis. OVR will report to the PaRC quarterly on plans to reopen the OOS and factors affecting progress toward achievement of this goal.

4. Identify resources and opportunities outside of OVR for organizations to provide employment services to OVR customers on the waitlist.

**OVR Response:** OVR will seek opportunities to leverage other public and private resources that may provide employment services to OVR customers on the waitlist. During a closed OOS, information and referral services will remain available. Individuals will be given information and referrals to other appropriate Federal and State programs, including programs carried out by other components of the Statewide Workforce Development System, such as the one-stop centers known in the commonwealth as PA CareerLink.

## **2. Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC)**

**Issue:** OVR's current fiscal problems require a review of HGAC's return on investment.

### **Recommendations/Measurable Goals:**

OVR should conduct a study at a minimum of every 3 years and report on the return on investment (compared to community-based VR services) for students attending HGAC. HGAC's yearly budget averages approximately \$23 million, which includes staff, operations, brick and

mortar and other costs. Overall, the cost per customer is reported as significantly higher at HGAC than that of non-HGAC customers. The report must include:

1. an analysis on return on investment
2. an impact statement on customer choice
3. a review of the extent to which its programs are provided in an integrated setting
4. an assessment of the availability of HGAC programs in the community; and
5. a determination of what other partners like the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) should be paying/contributing.

**OVR Response:** HGAC is not exclusively funded with VR funds; state funds are used for building maintenance. OVR will conduct a regular review of HGAC and provide data and information that illustrates the viability, value, and uniqueness of HGAC from multiple perspectives (customer satisfaction, Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, Fiscal, programmatic outcomes, diversification initiatives of student populations and revenue streams). When conducting this review, OVR will make an effort to show the differentiation between the use of state funds vs. federal VR funds. This information will be shared with the PaRC during quarterly meetings.

### **3. Conduct a review of OVR's statutory and regulatory obligations to obtain public comment and/or consult with stakeholders, providers, VR staff, and individuals with disabilities in the development, implementation and amendment of OVR's policies and procedures.**

**Issue:** Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.20, OVR is required to solicit public participation when it proposes to develop, amend or otherwise modify substantive policies/procedures affecting OVR services.

#### **Recommendations/Measurable goals:**

1. OVR should provide quarterly information on the number and names of new/amended policies, such as a college policy or vehicle modification policy, being developed or in consideration for future development/modification, including how they differ from any existing policy and the potential number of customers impacted by the policy.

**OVR Response:** During each PaRC quarterly meeting, OVR will continue to report on the number and names of new/amended policies being developed or in consideration for future development/ modification.

2. Inclusion of the Council in the development/amendment of the policy/procedure, the proposed timeline of implementation, including schedule of public comments and plans to educate stakeholders on the new/amended policy/procedure.

**OVR Response:** When a substantive policy/procedure change is being considered, OVR will continue to consult with RSA to confirm that a public comment period is necessary. OVR will continue to invite Council members to participate in any planned workgroup. OVR will continue to provide subsequent drafts of new and revised policies to the appropriate PaRC committees and full council. OVR will keep the PaRC informed of any training plan developed to educate stakeholders on policy changes.

### **4. Strengthen Collaboration and Partnerships with Stakeholders**

**Issue:** OVR has made significant changes to services without including key stakeholders throughout the change development process. OVR needs to make sure that those changes will not unnecessarily reduce the achievement of outcomes in terms of quantity and quality.

**Recommendations/Measurable goals:**

1. Before OVR makes any substantive changes, the PaRC will be informed of what needs to change and why, and what affected stakeholder representatives are being included in the change development process.

**OVR Response:** OVR will continue to inform the PaRC before making any substantive changes to policy and identify which stakeholders may be affected by any change.

2. OVR provides (at a minimum) quarterly reports to the PaRC on all substantive changes either anticipated or currently in development with information on progress, including key stakeholder representative involvement and contributions to the process.

**OVR Response:** When a substantive policy/procedure change is being considered, OVR will continue to invite Council members and stakeholder representatives to participate in any planned workgroup. Workgroup progress will be provided during quarterly PaRC meetings.

3. OVR provides annual reports (at a minimum) on feedback survey information from key partners.

**OVR Response:** Anytime OVR initiates a survey of key partners, the results will be shared during quarterly PaRC meetings.

4. OVR provides quarterly progress reports with measures of quality and quantity of outcomes for partnerships, programs, and services, including pre-employment transition services, local workforce development boards, supported and customized employment, business services, and PA CareerLinks.

**OVR Response:** OVR provides quarterly reports on Act 26, Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities, which is shared with the PaRC and available publicly on OVR's website. This report includes information related to pre-employment transition services as well as information on supported employment outcomes. OVR developed an Excel document that identifies connections between OVR District Offices with workforce development boards and PA CareerLinks. This document can be shared with the PaRC on an annual basis. OVR Business Services information is regularly included in the Executive Director quarterly report to the PaRC.

## **5. Review of OVR Policies and Procedures**

**Issue:** Clarification is required regarding public participation in the adoption or amendment of OVR policy, and OVR's obligation to consult with the PaRC, among others, on matters of general policy arising in the administration of the VR services portion of the State Plan.

**Recommendations/Measurable goals:**

OVR reports to the PaRC on a quarterly basis substantive policies and procedures under review which are subject to public meetings, non-substantive administrative changes, and policies on matters of general administration of the VR program which require consultation. Additionally, include quarterly reports on workgroups.

**OVR Response:** Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.20, OVR will report to the PaRC on any substantive changes to policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services that would require OVR to conduct public meetings and/or directly impacts services provided

to individuals with disabilities. As requested, OVR will also report during quarterly PaRC meetings on any active workgroups.

### 3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

OVR did not reject any of the PaRC's input or recommendations.

#### B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

##### 1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

OVR requests a continuation of its waiver of statewideness for its Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the School District of Lancaster (SDoL). Through this program, transition age students with disabilities are provided with enhanced activities and services that lead to employment or career-related postsecondary education or training.

The IGA provides SDoL with funds to administer two programs, named "Employability and Career Readiness" and "College and Career Readiness." The IGA allows for joint funding (including salary & benefits) of three positions which did not previously exist at SDoL:

1. Program Coordinator (Professional);
2. Vocational Special Education Teacher (Professional); and
3. Job Trainer (Paraprofessional).

The two programs are considered to be two separate paths for transition services. Pathway One is identified as "Employability and Career Readiness" and Pathway Two is identified as "College and Career Readiness."

Services in the Employability and Career Readiness program include:

1. workplace readiness instruction;
2. work-based learning experiences which include job shadowing, internships, and paid work experiences;
3. job development and placement services including employer contacts, job site analyses, job task analyses, facilitation of job accommodations, coordination of job interviews, and on-the-job supports;
4. career training supports to address employment related concerns on and off the job; and
5. independent living skills related to employment.

The Goals of the Employability and Career Readiness program are:

1. to provide employment skills, career readiness training and transition services to 50 OVR eligible students with disabilities;

2. to provide at least one form of work-based learning experience to 60 OVR eligible students with disabilities during PY 2020 – 2021;
3. to establish a minimum of 5 students-employee (job positions) with employers during 2020-2021 that afford small group training opportunities for OVR eligible students with disabilities;
4. to establish a minimum of 5 student-employee (job positions) with employers during 2020-2021 that afford on-site employment training opportunities for OVR eligible students with disabilities identified by the school district as having a need for a high level of support;
5. to have 25 OVR eligible students with disabilities receive job coaching services for PY 2020-2021; and
6. to have 20 OVR eligible students with disabilities shall be placed in competitive, community integrated employment consistent with their Individual Education Plan (IEP) for PY 2020-2021.

The College and Career Readiness program incorporates college and career readiness supports on a college campus. This Pathway is designed to assist students with disabilities acquire skills necessary in transitioning from high school to a post-secondary education program. Students enrolled in the College and Career Readiness program have identified employment goals which require post-secondary training to secure employment.

The goals of the College and Career Readiness program include:

1. during program years 2019-2020, and 2020-2021, providing college and career readiness instruction to 12 OVR eligible students with disabilities each year; and
2. a minimum of 8 OVR eligible students with disabilities shall be placed in post-secondary educational programs consistent with their Individualized Education Plan for PY 2020-2021.

The IGA was approved by SDoL and signed by the school's authorized representative. SDoL provides 21.3% of project funding which serves as the required local/state match. OVR provides the remaining 78.7% from federal VR funds.

During school year (2019-20) of the Employability and Career Readiness Program the following occurred: 110 students with disabilities received employability skills, career readiness training and transition services; 21 students participated in at least one form of work-based learning experience; 7 students with disabilities participated in paid work experiences at the School District of Lancaster; and 14 students gained work experiences in the community in partnership with OVR. All students in this program are encouraged to fully participate in OVR services and supports prior to and following graduation.

The College and Career Readiness Program, during the past two school years, provided 7 OVR eligible students with college/career readiness training and transition services, and they were placed in post-secondary education consistent with their IEP.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted enrollment of students and delivery of services.

Statewide replication of these programs could provide OVR with opportunities to braid funding, address the needs of OVR eligible students with disabilities, and to collaborate with the Departments of Education and Human Services more effectively.

OVR previously requested a waiver of statewideness for an IGA entered into with the Berks Career and Technology Center (BCTC) effective October 1, 2014, to provide school-to-work transition services to OVR eligible students with disabilities who are enrolled in approved training programs at BCTC and attend one of 16 public school districts within Berks County. The most recent IGA with BCTC was approved by the BCTC Board of Directors on December 10, 2018, signed by the school's authorized representative, and then fully executed by the Commonwealth on March 7, 2019. BCTC provided 21.3 % of project funding which served as the required local/state match. OVR provided the remaining 78.7 % from federal VR funds. This agreement expired and was converted to a Provider Agreement as of October 1, 2020.

## 2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

OVR, as the designated State unit, approved each proposed service before it was put into effect as demonstrated by a fully executed inter-governmental agreement (IGA) between the parties and following guidance in the OVR Fiscal Policy. Based upon 34 CFR §361.50 and the OVR Fiscal Policy guidance, the OVR Executive Director or their designee also conducted a rate review of these inter-agency agreements to determine appropriate rates. These agreements are available for review, by year, upon request.

OVR approves each proposed service before it is provided by requiring SDoL to submit budgets listing service costs for pre-approval. The IGAs were drafted to state that the parties to the agreements shall provide the services as specified and described in Appendix A of each of the Agreements, consistent with the submitted budgets as described in Appendix B of said Agreements. These terms are continued after the first-year term of the IGA, when the renewal process of the IGA requires the provider to submit statements of work including descriptions of the proposed services, a timeline for the provided services, and expected student outcomes, which OVR then approves or requests revisions on, prior to the execution of the renewal. Further, since the budgets are proposed and approved prior to the provision of the services, any changes to service provision must be requested by the provider and approved by OVR prior to implementation.

## 3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

All other State Plan requirements of the VR services portion of the State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

## C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

### 1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

Current agreements include the following:

1. The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), Department of Labor & Industry (DLI), Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), and Department of Human Services (DHS) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1999, with a 2006 Addendum, and a Transition MOU addendum in 2010, to devote staff and other agency resources to promote successful post-school outcomes for youth/young adults with disabilities in transition.
2. Per WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, an updated MOU was signed in October 2020 between OVR and PDE to share responsibility to prepare students with disabilities for successful community employment.
3. An MOU is in progress between OVR and the BSE, to share funds for technical assistance positions that will support the MOU between OVR and BSE.
4. A Data Sharing Agreement between OVR and the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) has been finalized to exchange information on the services delivered to individuals enrolled in DHS ODP programs who also receive or received services through OVR. OVR and ODP are sharing data between the CWDS and the Home & Community Services Information System.
5. OVR and ODP issued a joint bulletin that dictates when an individual receiving Supported Employment (SE) services can move to ODP-funded extended services and documentation requirements.
6. An MOU was initiated between OVR and the DHS Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) in 2017, which ends on June 30, 2022. The MOU allows for a funding transfer from DHS to OVR, which supports opportunities for customers with serious mental illnesses and serious emotional disturbances to participate in the Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) training opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment.
7. An MOU has been developed between OVR and DHS, Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services (BJJS). The MOU was established in May of 2017 to provide pre-employment transition services to adjudicated students and youth placed in Pennsylvania Academic Career Technical Training (PACTT) affiliate locations. The MOU was amended in July 2019 to also include dependent students and youth. OVR has collaborated with the PACTT affiliates to provide the 5 required pre-employment transition services to this vulnerable population to expose them to as many employment and post-secondary options as possible. OVR has provided group and individual services to these affiliates through pre-employment transition services provider agreements with the PACTT affiliate, OVR staff, or an outside provider. OVR has also collaborated with local community colleges to provide post-secondary educational opportunities to residential, community-based, and secure facilities throughout the state.
8. OVR has entered into Institute of Higher Education Agreements with the 14 State owned Universities under the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and 14 Community Colleges.
9. VR partners with Pennsylvania Centers for Independent Living (CILs) by executing grants and contracts for CIL's to provide services and outreach projects to individuals with disabilities within community settings.
10. OVR has entered into IGAs with the SDoL, ODP, and OMHSAS for the provision of VR services and referrals.
11. OVR supports a variety of Project SEARCH programs across Pennsylvania that offer educational opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities, primarily

intellectual and developmental. OVR's support is through cooperative agreements with county mental health offices, local school districts, and employers that include hospital systems and local government units.

## 2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

PA-OVR utilizes the following agreements to address the assistive technology needs of customers seeking employment services:

1. Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology ("PIAT") - The Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL) is a program facilitated through the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, "TechOWL." PIAT is a regional center for southeast Pennsylvania and is also the main organization for TechOWL. PIAT facilitates the activities of all of the other regional centers and reports to the state and federal agencies that fund our work. ATLL is Pennsylvania's statewide program under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act. Activities that are provided by ATLL are: device demonstrations; device lending; device reuse; public awareness activities; and trainings to raise awareness and knowledge of assistive technology (AT) topics. Any of these activities are available to Pennsylvanians with disabilities which includes OVR staff and clients, often at no charge.
2. OVR utilizes additional AT providers through whom services and/or devices can be purchased to address the specific needs of customers. OVR has executed Letters of Understanding (LOUs) or Administrative Memoranda (AM) agreements for expanded services to customers.

## 3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Currently, OVR does not have any agreements with the Department of Agriculture. However, in 1997, OVR and the Pennsylvania State University, College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State Extension approved an LOU for the AgrAbility program. In 2017, two new fees were added to the LOU to include reimbursement for travel and professional fees. Currently both agencies are working together to develop a new AM. The AgrAbility Project is a statewide project whose staff provides direct services for OVR customers who are farmers with a disability who want to remain in production agriculture. This agreement does not guarantee a specific amount of total funds or total number of participants to be funded by OVR. OVR has modeled this agreement and payment structure after existing rates and services where applicable.

## 4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

OVR has numerous Provider Agreements and AMs with a variety of service providers serving all populations, including out-of-school youth:

- OVR has developed an On-the-Job Training (OJT) initiative specifically targeting youth. This was entitled "Jobs for All" and allowed a Youth in plan status who starts a non-permanent summer job to have their employer reimbursed for their wages. One occupational sector, large scale amusement and theme parks such as Hershey Park in Derry Township Dauphin Co., DelGrosso's amusement Park and Laguna Splash Water Park in Tyrone, PA., and Dorney Park in Allentown, have offered summer youth served by OVR hundreds of hours of work. These initial employment experiences have helped to build soft skills, a work ethic and work record. Other employers have included municipalities, seasonal retailers and food service/fast food employment. This initiative included over 230 employers.
- OVR continues to develop more programs to partner with community service providers to target transition aged youth. This includes access to summer jobs through shared



employer contacts such as Lowe's, Fed Ex., Fenner Drives, Giant Eagle, McDonalds and Walmart. Recent statewide MY Work experiences for out of school youth include paid work experiences in partnership with local municipalities.

- OVR supports a variety of Project SEARCH initiatives across Pennsylvania. Project SEARCH is a one-year internship program that provides education opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities, primarily intellectual and developmental disabilities. The focus can be on students in their last year of high school, young adults with disabilities, or adults with disabilities. The program takes place at a host business in a healthcare, government, or other business setting where a total immersion in the workplace facilitates the teaching and learning process as well as the acquisition of employability and marketable work skills.

## 5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

OVR uses a number of statewide contracts through the Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS), the agency responsible for the majority of Commonwealth contracting programs.

OVR and ODP have developed a Training Services Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) through DGS for Specialized Professional Skills Development Training. This ITQ pre-qualifies contractors to provide Supportive Employment Certification Trainings for OVR and/or ODP Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) agencies, who support individuals with the most significant disabilities, and who provide supportive employment services. When a training is needed, a Request for Quote (RFQ) is developed and sent to the qualified contractors. An ITQ qualified contractor will be awarded a contract to provide necessary services based on the best value, meaning the best service. Contractors will provide training for CRP agencies for the following two certifications: The Association of Community Rehabilitation Coordinators (ACRE)'s Certificate Training Program; or the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certification.

DGS has executed multiple contracts with various service providers across the commonwealth to provide Sign Language Interpretation and Transliteration Services for all agencies in the commonwealth requiring the services of an interpreter or translator for business functions. OVR uses these contracts to secure interpreter services for daily business proceedings, meetings, workshops, public presentations, and conventions.

DGS has developed an ITQ for Information Technology (IT) hardware providers for Commonwealth agencies to purchase IT hardware. OVR then issues a Request for Proposal to qualified providers to purchase computers, monitors and peripherals for staff.

DGS developed a statewide (IT) Services ITQ to qualify contractors to address IT service requirements of Commonwealth executive agencies. This contract is for fixed price, deliverables-based IT services projects. OVR uses this contract to purchase IT Training-Classroom/Non-Classroom for OVR staff.

## D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

1. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-

## EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS

The School to Work Transition Policy was updated on March 11, 2021. The policy details OVR staff responsibilities regarding Pre-ETS, transition services, outreach, collaboration, and financial responsibility. In regard to coordination with education, OVR will collaborate with LEAs to improve the successful movement from school to work for students and youth with disabilities. OVR representatives will work with LEAs to develop strong, consistent relationships with LEAs so the OVR representative's knowledge and expertise can be of benefit to students and youth with disabilities, even before students/youth are formally referred to OVR.

Transition services, including Pre-ETS, offered by OVR will supplement, but not replace, IDEA transition services delivered through a secondary school or any other entity charged with the delivery of transition services in accordance with IDEA. The LEA is responsible for providing and paying for transition services that are also considered special education or related services and that are necessary for ensuring a free, appropriate public education to children with disabilities. Nothing under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act shall be construed as reducing an LEA's obligation to provide the above-described services under IDEA (see section 101(c) of the Rehabilitation Act and §361.22(c) of the VR regulations).

VR transition services facilitate the transition from school to post-secondary life, such as achievement of an employment outcome in competitive, integrated employment. Pre-ETS are part of the continuum of services that VR can provide to students with disabilities.

OVR will also designate a liaison to PDE and provide statewide coordination and technical assistance for transition from school to work. An OVR representative maintains contact as needed with personnel in area schools, alternative educational sites and community resources to ensure early identification of students and youth who may require VR services. These students and youth may or may not be receiving special education services.

### 2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

#### A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VR SERVICES;

OVR and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education (PDE-BSE) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU was approved by all parties in October 2020. A training series that overviewed the MOU agreement was provided to OVR, BSE, LEA's, youth and families. The trainings were offered on April 8, 2021 (Unpacking the MOU), April 21, 2021 (Engaging Stakeholders) and May 13, 2021 (Strategies for Aligning Efforts).

In addition, OVR has collaborated with PDE-BSE on launching a new PA Secondary Transition website with the intent to provide a "one-stop shop" for professionals and which provides general information about transition, practices, and resources. The website also includes an inter-agency shared events calendar and a place to share current announcements and

information. The website is closely aligned with the Transition Discoveries website that contains resources for youth and families.

In the MOU with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, OVR agrees to:

- provide consultation for transition planning for students with disabilities to facilitate the development of their IEPs. OVR can provide information, technical assistance, case consultation and information/referral as needed for eligible or potentially eligible students.
- inform and collaborate with Local Education Agencies (LEA) on development and implementation of community events, such as job fairs, transition fairs, and career days, to introduce students with disabilities to possible career goals.
- Create a consistent communication plan to develop policies and procedures; and
- Along with BSE, collaborate on the provision of ongoing joint staff training, such as development and implementation of IEPs, pre-employment transition services, accommodations under Section 504, and limitations on youth entering employment paying subminimum wage.

Additionally, OVR participates in collaborative training each school year with other statewide transition stakeholders for education staff so that the most recent pre-employment transition services information is made available to all LEAs.

BSE will direct LEAs to disseminate these requirements to parents, guardians, teachers, and students. OVR will maintain the documentation and provide a copy to the youth within the timelines identified as specified under 34 C.F.R. Part 397. Any of the services identified above that LEAs provide must be documented by the LEA and provided to the student and OVR.

**B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;**

OVR can assist the students and youth with a disability transition from school to competitive, integrated employment, or from school to post-secondary training/education that leads to competitive, integrated employment. The transition goal of the student with a disability should always remain the priority of the IEP process. It is OVR's role to provide appropriate and necessary information to the student and parent/advocate to ensure the IEP is developed with effective transition foremost in mind.

LEAs will send timely invitations to OVR counselors for participation in IEP meetings, when appropriate. When possible, OVR staff will attend IEP meetings in person or by alternative means, such as videoconferences and conference calls, when invited by the LEA. If they cannot participate in the IEP meeting, OVR staff can provide information, vocational planning and guidance, and transition-specific materials to the IEP team.

In addition to the MOU and WIOA, The Pennsylvania Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act (Act 2016-26) requires OVR to collaborate with local education and public agencies. Act 2016-26 requires that students with disabilities have pre-employment transition services included in Individualized Education Plans (IEP) when appropriate and that OVR reports on IEP meeting attendance.

**C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;**

The MOU outlines the Roles and Responsibilities of each agency:

**OVR Responsibilities:**

- Provide students with pre-employment transition services and transition services under Title IV of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA.
- Conduct outreach for students with disabilities who may benefit from VR services as early as appropriate during the transition planning process. OVR will work to foster the referral of students with disabilities to VR services at least two years prior to exiting high school.
- Coordinate a referral process for students with disabilities in need of pre-employment transition services, and students or youth with disabilities interested in applying for VR services
- Determine eligibility for individual VR services and develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in coordination with the student's or youth's IEP or 504 plan as early as possible, if a student is interested and applies for VR services prior to graduation.
- Attend IEP meetings in person or by alternative means, such as videoconferences and conference calls, when invited by LEAs.
- Designate staff to be responsible for the oversight of the provision of technical assistance and consultation, and the development of program strategies and procedures applicable for students with disabilities.
- Provide technical assistance to BSE and LEAs through formal and informal training, joint problem-solving, and exchange of information on policies and procedures.
- Identify a single point of contact for each LEA and other schools (including approved private schools and other specialty schools) who will coordinate transition activities, develop collaborative approaches for student outreach and referral for VR services, facilitate communication with OVR staff, and assist with transition planning that facilitates the completion of a student's IEP and the student's transition from school to post-school employment.
- Provide information to BSE on referrals and employment outcomes of students with disabilities by LEA on an annual basis, and additional information as requested and as applicable law allows.
- Share information regarding policies, procedures, guidelines, programs and services to improving the access to, and availability of, pre-employment transition services and transition services.
- Provide brochures and materials about the OVR process and services to LEAs for distribution to the students, parents, legal guardians, teachers and others.

- Conduct outreach to businesses and promote employer participation in work-based learning experiences, such as worksite tours, employer mock interviews, job shadowing, and paid work experiences for students with disabilities.
- Advise OVR staff to attend IEP meetings when invited and with parental consent to provide employment information, technical assistance, case consultation, and information on VR programs and referrals needed (refer to BSE/OVR Tools and Guidance Document).
- Perform outreach activities that help inform LEAs, students with disabilities, and their families about the VR program, including purpose of program, VR eligibility requirements, referral and application procedures, and the scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals.
- Provide supported employment services to a student in their final 6 months of high school to secure permanent competitive, integrated employment if it is an identified service in their IPE.

#### BSE Responsibilities:

- Ensure the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), including transition services.
- IDEA [34 CFR §300.43 (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(34))]
- Transition services for children with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.
- Ensure that LEAs' coordinated set of activities supports career and post-secondary education and training options.
- Ensure that LEAs collaborate with OVR in the provision of transition services and pre-employment transition services.
- Ensure that LEAs collaborate with OVR in determining the student's needed pre-employment transition activities based upon the student's current assessment and secondary transition post-secondary goals.
- Ensure that LEAs provide opportunities for students to develop employment skills and participate in community experiences.
- Ensure that LEAs provide available student information to assist in VR eligibility determination and receipt of pre-employment transition services.
- Ensure that LEAs assist OVR staff with access to students and their school environment and with identifying opportunities to work with students.
- Ensure that LEAs invite OVR staff to the student's IEP meeting.
- Ensure that LEAs collaborate with OVR to determine who will be responsible for providing services that are both special education services and VR services.
- Ensure LEAs are not contracting with an entity for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.

- For students with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment after high school exit, ensure that LEAs provide OVR documentation of completion of appropriate transition services under IDEA.
- Ensure that LEAs implement special education requirements for transition planning services specified in IDEA as evidenced by the development and implementation of IEPs for students with identified needs.
- Designate BSE personnel to be responsible for the provision of technical assistance and consultation, and the development of statewide program strategies and procedures applicable to students with disabilities transitioning from school to post-school activities.
- Coordinate a network of professionals focused on assisting schools with implementing effective transition planning and services.
- Provide technical assistance and consultation to OVR through formal and informal training, joint problem-solving, and exchange of information on policies and procedures.
- In accordance with applicable law, share data related to students with disabilities regarding transition services, post-secondary goals, post high school outcomes, and exiting environment data.
- Provide representation on the VR State Rehabilitation Council and relevant committee participation.

#### Mutual Responsibilities:

- Training and Technical Assistance: OVR will provide consultation and technical assistance to LEAs that will assist in the planning and transition of all students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible from school to post-school activities, including employment. OVR will develop and provide common training and professional development opportunities to improve transition and employment results for youth.
- Planning and Coordination: OVR and BSE will collaborate in the development of a work group (Pre-Employment Transition Activities Task Force) that targets the improvement of transition to employment outcomes in integrated, community settings for students with disabilities. This taskforce will also explore and identify pre-employment transition services and transition-related services (work-based learning, internships, apprenticeships, dual enrollment programs, industry recognized credential programs, and college programs). Further, OVR and BSE agree to work collaboratively to coordinate with and engage employers on pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities and transition services for youth with disabilities.
- OVR and BSE will continue to collaborate and lead in the PA Secondary Transition Community of Practice and related State Leadership Team.
- Data Sharing: OVR and BSE will share of data, within the bounds of applicable law, of potentially eligible and/or eligible students with disabilities regarding transition services and outcomes.
- OVR and BSE will post this MOU and provide training and technical assistance to VR and Education staff at the state and local level that is recorded and archived on their respective websites.

- OVR and BSE will provide relevant training and technical assistance to minimize redundant services and maximize resources in both systems.
- OVR and BSE will provide a copy of this MOU to the following key stakeholders:
  1. all LEA superintendents or chief school administrators;
  2. all directors of special education;
  3. all OVR District Administrators;
  4. the DLI Office of Developmental Programs;
  5. Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC);
  6. State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation;
  7. Right to Education State Task Force and Local Task Forces;
  8. Client Assistance Program (CAP); and
  9. other entities as identified.
- OVR and BSE will mutually develop and distribute notices, memorandums, and other information regarding transition to key stakeholders.
- Transition Services/Accommodations: OVR and BSE will identify and disseminate information about pre-employment transition services and transition services, accommodations, employment services, effective practices/strategies that create positive employment outcomes to program staff, partners, families, individuals, employers, and public and private stakeholders.
- Assistive Technology (AT): BSE will work with OVR on identifying the AT needs of students eligible for OVR services.
- OVR and BSE will encourage students with disabilities to gain targeted skills necessary to compete in the workforce through specialized technical education programs, trade schools, pre-apprenticeships/apprenticeships, industry-based skills trainings, and internships.
- OVR and BSE will investigate additional funding sources for high school students with disabilities, such as statewide WIOA Title I programs for supplemental assistance through individual training accounts (ITAs).

For financial responsibilities, OVR and BSE will identify a method for defining the financial responsibility of OVR and LEAs for the provision of VR services and will identify procedures under which OVR may initiate proceedings to secure reimbursement for VR services from LEAs and vice versa. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.154 & 361.53(d)(3)(i) and (iii).

Disagreements about which entity is financially responsible for payment for services may occur, and decisions about whether the service is related to an employment outcome or educational attainment, or whether the service is considered a special education or related service, as well as whether the service is one customarily provided under IDEA or the Rehabilitation Act, will be made at the State level by BSE and OVR.

LEAs should continue to provide some of the transition services typically provided under IDEA rather than cease providing the services with a referral to the VR program. If any of the five required pre-employment transition services are needed by a student with a disability, and are not customary services provided by LEAs, OVR will collaborate and coordinate with the LEA regarding the provision of such services.

When similar or identical service needs are identified as education-related in the IEP established by the LEA and employment-related in the IPE established by OVR, it is understood that disputes will be resolved between OVR and LEAs at the local level. The process for dispute resolution is as follows:

- If the service is special education or a related service and included in the student's IEP, the LEA may provide the service either directly or through other sources, or request OVR provide the service. If OVR determines the service does not violate the comparable benefits policy (unless such a determination would interrupt or delay the progress of the individual) and is identified as a service on the individual's IPE, OVR may assume the costs for the service. If OVR determines that the purpose of the service is more for educational attainment than achievement of competitive, integrated employment, then the LEA would pay for the service, as they would for services under IDEA.
- OVR's funding for assessment for eligibility and vocational needs, counseling and referral services, job placement services, rehabilitation technology and auxiliary aids and services are exempt from comparable benefit and the financial needs test.
- When AT goods or services are needed for educational purposes, it will be the financial responsibility of the LEA. However, prior to exit from high school, OVR will determine needs and comparable benefits for AT for post-secondary education and employment purposes for the individual as needed for employment and identified on the individual's IPE.

Nothing in the MOU shall be construed to reduce the obligation under IDEA for LEAs to provide/pay for transition services that are required to ensure FAPE.

#### D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

OVR and BSE will support outreach activities that will ensure referrals to OVR to provide eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities a smooth school-to-work transition. OVR outreach activities focus on providing information about VR to school staff, students, families, community professionals, and others interested in Pre-ETS and transition services, including students and families of diverse backgrounds. Outreach to these students should occur as early as possible during the transition planning process and must include, at a minimum, a description of the following:

- VR program purpose;
- eligibility requirements;
- application procedures;
- scope of services that may be provided to eligible students; and
- Pre-ETS that may be provided to potentially eligible or eligible students.



OVR will provide information to BSE and LEAs regarding OVR services that will be disseminated to students and their families. BSE will ensure that LEAs highlight the information and outreach activities provided by OVR and make such information and activities available to all students with disabilities and families of students with disabilities.

OVR staff may conduct outreach in the following manner such as:

- providing VR brochures and business cards to the school;
- presenting at the first open house, family information nights, or orientation held at the school;
- conducting regularly scheduled school visits;
- participating in transition and job fairs at the school;
- attending IEP meetings, when invited; and
- speaking about Pre-ETS and VR services at school staff meetings, teacher in-service trainings, student/family group meetings, or interagency meetings.

OVR will work with LEAs to ensure referrals of students with disabilities to the VR program at the beginning of the school year. Referral for Pre-ETS should begin at age 14 for all students with disabilities who may need them.

While outreach typically occurs in the LEA environment, OVR will work with PDE to identify students and youth with disabilities who may not be served in public schools under an IEP or 504 Plan. Outreach will be conducted to identify students and youth with disabilities who are underserved through other community partners, such as, but not limited to:

- Intermediate Units (IUs);
- career and technology centers;
- approved private schools;
- charter and cyber schools;
- home school organizations;
- student assistance programs;
- summer competitive, integrated employment programs;
- Workforce Development Boards;
- Parent-Teacher Associations, etc.;
- juvenile justice system;
- foster youth organizations;
- homeless shelters/programs; and
- medical facilities.

#### E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

OVR maintains negotiated LOUs, as well as AMs and provider agreements with more than 200 community service providers covering more than 1,000 different rehabilitation, independent living and related services. OVR is currently converting LOUs to an AM or a provider agreement. Many of these organizations are private and/or not-for-profit CRPs.

Through these various agreements, OVR defines service programs and the corresponding conditions of purchase, including fees and effective/expiration dates, which exist between a rehabilitation service provider and OVR. An agreement entered into between OVR and a community service provider creates a locally developed, locally negotiated, and locally sensitive response to the rehabilitation service needs of persons with significant disabilities in the diverse areas of the commonwealth.

These agreements are neither a contract nor a grant agreement, but an agreement between the parties that sets forth the services and rates that will be acceptable for OVR payment. They do not commit either provider or OVR to the sale or purchase of the defined services, or a guarantee of provision or business. The use of an LOU or AM for OVR customer service allows OVR to provide customer choice, to respond to a customer's satisfaction with the service, to control affordability of service fees, and the ability to provide alternative services when needed.

#### F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment (SE) services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

OVR has coordinated with other State Offices such as ODP, OMHSAS, Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL), and other entities to provide SE services and extended services. In February 2019, a joint bulletin between OVR and ODP was issued outlining referral processes for SE cases in which a customer is eligible for OVR services and waivers through ODP. OVR will continue to communicate and collaborate with these Offices to provide quality SE services and provide referrals and information regarding mutual customers. OVR will provide current information and training to State Offices and other entities to ensure the provision of services and extended services.

OVR will continue to support the provision of quality supportive employment services by adequately trained and properly credentialed staff either directly, through other state and local government agencies, or private service agencies, as appropriate.

DLI and DHS are in the process of developing an MOU for SE Services. The MOU for SE services will guide a partnership to establish the collaborative framework for OVR and DHS to develop, expand, and improve opportunities for competitive employment for individuals with

disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities. OVR and DHS will fund SE services, including Customized Employment, by committing to the implementation of complementary programs to assist with the provision of these services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to enable them to achieve an employment outcome of SE in competitive integrated employment. This MOU will ensure a smooth transition from SE services to extended services.

## G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

### 1. VR SERVICES; AND

OVR routinely engages with employers and businesses to better understand their workforce needs so OVR can prepare individuals with disabilities with industry skills to best meet industry skill demands required by businesses and employers to be successful in competing in the global marketplace. OVR has Central Office staff who are available to meet with an employer to listen and explore their organization's unique culture to learn about the services or products they produce, to learn about employee skill needs, and how the leadership of a company or organization envisions their future workforce succession planning and the inclusion of VR talent throughout all levels of their organization. Where possible, OVR will coordinate business outreach with local workforce boards, PA CareerLinks, economic development partners, community rehabilitation agencies, DHS Offices of ODP, OMHSAS, and OLTL, and other DLI Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO) multi-employer workforce partnerships.

1. In response to an organization's workforce talent needs, OVR can suggest a recruitment process to bring qualified pre-screened individuals with a disability into their organization.
2. OVR will work with each business to target career ladders and pathways for quality competitive integrated employment in career pathways matched to each VR consumer customer's financial needs, unique aspirations, capacities and the talent succession plans of an employer.
3. OVR will keep the process simple by using a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) approach modeled after the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) use of a national Points of Contact network when a business with multi-county or state operations seek VR talent across several states and Pennsylvania workforce regions.

The following are OVR employer outreach and networking strategies to work with employers to increase competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities:

1. national and in-state outreach to employers/businesses to recruit and hire people with disabilities will consistently be encouraged through engagement or registration with CWDS, CSAVR, National Employment Team (VR-NET), and the VR-NET Talent Acquisition Portal;
2. employer outreach by Business Services and Outreach Division (BSOD) Specialists through in-person and/or virtual/telephonic meetings, regional and statewide RSA-allowable Chamber of Commerce membership, networking, and Society of Human Resource Manager statewide and local organization involvement;
3. outreach to employers to recruit and hire people with disabilities through local District Offices and the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC). HGAC business services staff will identify and coordinate with the referring district Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) and business services staff to find a suitable job match for customers. This will include identifying any measurable skill gains that result from the customers acquisition

of an industry recognized credential. Local District Office business service teams will actively coordinate employer recruitment, work-based learning experiences, internships, apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, On-the-Job (OJT) and other on-boarding supports for OVR customers. Local office business services staff, in consultation with VRCs, will monitor successful job performance and follow-up with the OVR customer and employer to ensure job retention;

4. no-cost consultation to employers will be provided on disability etiquette, accessibility, and accommodation needs by Business Services and Outreach Division (BSOD) specialists, HGAC staff or combined bureau staff upon request. Referral assistance to help retain an employer's workforce following an injury or the onset of a disability will also be provided. OVR staff trained in the mid-Atlantic TransCen, ADA Leadership models from Cornell University and a BSOD specialist trained on the use of the Misericordia University, Comprehensive Accessibility Kit, and the Americans with Disability Act Architectural Guidelines standards, will provide non-legal, best practice disability etiquette training, and on-site accessibility compliance reviews;
5. BSOD specialists will provide no-cost compliance consultations to Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) of 14C Federal Ability One, or State operated set aside vendors, to ensure work settings are fully integrated before federal VR funds are used in placement supports or on-boarding;
6. OVR business services will conduct employer/business satisfaction surveys to measure effectiveness in business engagement; and
7. BSOD specialists and combined local bureau staff will continue to promote and support National Disability Employment Awareness Month events. These events will include employer champions who actively recruit and retain persons with disabilities in their workforce.
8. OVR will work to establish regular employment hiring events to serve employers both at local/regional and statewide levels. These events may be conducted both in-person and through virtual means. In-person events are anticipated to incur costs for venue, supplies, marketing, and other materials to ensure the success and participation of employers, service providers, human service resources, and participants with disabilities. Virtual hiring events may require the purchase of a web access platform to accommodate an interactive and accessible virtual venue.
9. BSOD staff will assess and market available resources and services offered by OVR to employers through a proposed Business Portfolio tool. This tool will be offered to employers both in printed and electronic formats and will be designed to showcase the value of business partnerships with OVR and its constituents.

### **Partnering with Workforce Agencies to Align with Regional Employment Sectors**

OVR (BSOD) staff and District Office business services teams will participate in regional planning processes in partnership with local workforce development boards.

OVR and Workforce partners will review and target employers in the key expansion sectors for the highest level of business engagement, which will include discussions around establishment of work-based learning experiences. In addition, all OVR business services staff will utilize and share Labor Market Information (LMI) published monthly from the Pennsylvania Department of

Labor and Industry's (DLI's) Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) with their district office VR Counselor's (VRC's) to promote career-based IPEs likely to lead to successful employment and skill training to prepare for expansion or 'super' sector jobs in each region of Pennsylvania.

## 2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

OVR continues to expand its collaboration with employers, industry partnerships, and other multi-employer workforce partnerships to provide students and youth with disabilities opportunities for career exploration to promote competitive, integrated employment. Students and youth with disabilities will be given opportunities to complete work-based learning experiences to develop soft skills and work-related skills. Students and youth with disabilities may be afforded opportunities to complete mock interviews with employers, job shadowing experiences, career days, disability mentoring days with employers, and other pre-employment transition services to prepare students for competitive employment. Project SEARCH is one example of this type of collaboration.

## H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

### 1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

In Pennsylvania, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is the agency responsible for administering the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act. OVR collaborates with this department on a number of initiatives. First, OVR is a key member of the Pennsylvania Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project (EFSLMP), a project initiated in 2014 and sponsored by a grant administered by the Office of Disability Employment Policy within DHS. The goal of the project is to ensure that the employment needs of individuals with disabilities are met, that cost services are comprehensive, effective, innovative and not duplicative, and that every individual with a disability who wants to work to achieve self-support will be given the opportunity to do so. An OVR representative also participates in the provider Community of Practice conference calls and monthly webinar series developed by the EFSLMP project for partner agencies.

Secondly, OVR participates in cross agency collaboration and coordination with DHS as part of the Pennsylvania Employment First Act (Act 2018-36). This is a Governor inspired initiative to ensure individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve economic independence through competitive integrated employment. Cross-agency collaboration between OVR and DHS' Office of Long Term Living (OLTL) demonstrate continued partnership and commitment to Act 2018-36, where competitive integrated employment, including self-employment, shall be the first consideration and preferred outcome when serving persons with disabilities who are of working age. This cross-agency collaboration between OVR and OLTL is important because agencies may have shared customers who are seeking/receiving employment services to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment, and overall will increase efficiency and effectiveness across programs. OLTL may fund extended services for customers receiving waiver services through OLTL to assist with long term SE services to maintain competitive integrated employment.

The Office of the Governor, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities, have developed an initial three-year plan of which OVR and DHS are key participants, along with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). A few of the priorities of Act 2018-36 include promoting a vision of Employment First for all Pennsylvanians, promoting paid work experiences, ensuring effective use of transition funding, promoting self-

advocacy, offering professional training, increasing pre-employment skill development, promoting Discovery and Customized Employment opportunities, and encouraging case information sharing among agencies. OLTL, within DHS, is one of the key agencies, along with OVR, helping to implement the Pennsylvania Employment First Act.

Thirdly, since the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services Technical guide (Version 3.5, January 2015) was published, OLTL has added Employment Services to their menu of available services. The OLTL program is charged with implementing the Community HealthChoices (CHC) delivery, a capitated Medicare managed care program for adults eligible for Medicaid and Medicare (dual eligible), older adults and individuals with physical disabilities. The Commonwealth rolled out CHC in three (3) regional phases completed in January 2020. Cross-agency collaboration is a vital component to the successful transition.

## 2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

In Pennsylvania, the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities is DHS/ODP. One of the ways that OVR collaborates with DHS/ODP is through Section 511 of the WIOA. Section 511 of WIOA amends the Rehabilitation Act, and has added new requirements that place limitations on the payment of subminimum wages by entities holding special wage certificates under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. § 201 *et seq.* The provisions of Section 511 require more involvement from OVR with individuals working in Section 511 subminimum wage jobs and services for those under 24 years old prior to placement in a Section 511 employment position. DHS/ODP provides the license to the facilities that OVR must visit and monitor. Section 511 of WIOA requires that certain criteria must now be satisfied before an entity hires individuals with disabilities who are age 24 or younger (youths) at subminimum wage or continues to employ individuals with disabilities of any age at the subminimum wage level. OVR's role is to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to information and services that will enable them to achieve competitive integrated employment.

OVR provides services to individuals working in Section 511 subminimum wage jobs in the form of Career Information and Referral Sessions. OVR's Section 511 Career Information and Referral Sessions focus on: reassuring individuals that they do not need to make any changes; promoting informed choice and independent decision making about competitive integrated employment; increasing awareness of OVR services; and providing information about other agencies that can help them to achieve their goals for personal growth and independence.

## 3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

DHS's OMHSAS is responsible for providing mental health services in Pennsylvania. OVR uses many avenues to ensure collaboration and partnership in the delivery of SE and extended services with OMHSAS. An MOU was initiated in November 2017 between OVR and OMHSAS. This MOU provides a goal to increase Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) training opportunities for individuals with mental health conditions. Through the MOU, OVR and OMHSAS will expand training opportunities to those individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing with a mental health condition. These trainings will allow those individuals to obtain competitive integrated employment as a CPS. OVR and OMHSAS agree that assisting individuals with serious emotional disturbances and serious mental illnesses to secure and maintain competitive integrated employment includes: paid work experiences; training; postsecondary education; seamless transition from secondary education to adult life; outreach and awareness activities targeted to individuals, families, and businesses; pre-employment activities; and other programs and initiatives that lead to or result in competitive integrated employment. Individuals with mental

health impairments continue to comprise a large percentage of the impairment cause in our open cases on an annual basis. OVR will continue to offer, through IPEs, services for restoration, guidance and counseling, training, placement assistance, and employment supports to help individuals with mental health impairments achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome.

## I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

### 1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

#### A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

##### I. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;

The OVR Recruitment and Retention Specialist collects and analyzes, on an annual basis, data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development. OVR works through the Pennsylvania Office of Administration Human Resources Division for managing personnel issues and filling vacant positions.

As of November 5, 2021, OVR had 815 filled salaried positions and 217 vacancies. This figure includes 149 filled salaried positions at the Hiram G. Andrews Center. Statewide, OVR had a total of 313 filled Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling Professionals (includes Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Trainees, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Interns) positions, 19 Vision Rehabilitation Therapist positions, and 9 Orientation and Mobility Specialists positions. OVR continues to evaluate each salaried position prior to posting for hire to ensure that it is essential to operations before approving the position.

In relation to the number of employees within OVR, the number of OVR customers who had an open VR case as of June 30, 2021 was 45,535 individuals.

##### II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

OVR is in need of the following personnel, by category:

- VRCs (includes VR Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing): 394 positions
- Vision Rehabilitation Therapists: 19 positions
- Orientation and Mobility Specialists: 14 positions

OVR continues to closely monitor hiring. The VR Specialist for Recruitment and Retention assists OVR Managers to evaluate each position prior to posting for hire and works in close coordination with the Human Resources Division within the PA Office of Labor and Industry. OVR regularly reviews staffing patterns and caseload size in relation to the number of individuals seeking services to determine coverage needs. Projection data indicates that there is an existing population of students with disabilities transitioning from school to post-secondary activities, including work that may require additional staff to adequately serve. These requirements will also be monitored and adapted to meet any changing needs.

III. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Projections by personnel category are as follows:

- VRC (includes VR Counselors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing): 40 projected vacancies in next 5 years;
- Vision Rehabilitation Therapist: 3 projected vacancies in next 5 years; and
- Orientation and Mobility Specialists: 3 projected vacancies in next 5 years.

OVR projects that in the next five years, approximately 40 VRCs will become eligible to retire. This will be an average of 10 VRCs retiring per year, in addition to an unknown number of counselors who leave as part of general turnover. Additional numbers of new VRC's may be needed due to promotions into management positions. If the number of customers seeking VR services remains the same, or slightly increases or decreases, OVR projects that an average of 15-20 new VRCs will need to be hired per year over the next 5-10 years. OVR realizes the need for continued recruitment and training of qualified personnel. Succession planning is a necessary part of OVR's preparation to address projected hiring needs and is included within the annual analysis of qualified personnel needs and personnel development.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

The OVR Recruitment Specialist maintains regular contact with the institutions of higher education within Pennsylvania who offer programs to develop VR professionals and annually collects information on student enrollment. There are four Pennsylvania Universities that are accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and the Council Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): Pennsylvania State University, University of Pittsburgh, University of Scranton, and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. When these universities are combined, these programs graduate approximately 52 students per year with a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. See chart below.

**Table 1: CORE & CACREP Universities - Enrollment and Graduate Numbers**

Institutions	Students Enrolled	Graduates sponsored by RSA	Graduates from the previous year
Penn State University	11	6	19
University of Pittsburgh	29	0	18
Edinboro University of PA	10	0	6
University of Scranton	19	0	10



A student successfully achieving graduation from one of these universities would be eligible to apply for the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor or CRCC certification exam, a nationally recognized professional certification in the field of vocational rehabilitation.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

Information provided in section i.1.B.i.

III. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

Information provided in section i.1.B.i.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

OVR Counselor Recruitment

As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic, all Pennsylvania Commonwealth agencies (including OVR) were placed under a hiring freeze as of March 2020. Since this directive was initiated by the PA Governor (Tom Wolf), OVR has been unable to hire VRC Interns and new VRC's from March 2020 to present. The VR Specialist responsible for recruitment and retention of employees has been working diligently with the HR liaison and the Office of Administration in developing and implementing a strategic plan for recruitment.

In addition to the available students graduating from in-state programs, OVR's VR Specialist responsible for recruitment can recruit students from CORE/CACREP-approved universities that offer a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling nationwide. Pennsylvania residency requirements are waived under the State Civil Service commission for the VR Counselor Internship position and other VR Counselor classifications in OVR. This waiver provides OVR with an opportunity to recruit students nationwide and offer paid VR Counselor Intern positions to interested master's degree students who are in their final semester of graduate school. The paid internship allows OVR to attract and recruit candidates for VRC positions who have a master's degree in Rehabilitation while they are still in school and before they are recruited by other agencies. The residency waiver and the paid internship position also assist in OVR's efforts to recruit and hire from a broader recruitment pool and can include more individuals with disabilities and those from diverse and minority backgrounds.

OVR's Counselor Internship program continues to serve as an example among state VR agencies that seek to attract rehabilitation counseling students for employment. While surrounding states offer internship opportunities to students with competitive compensation, none in the northeastern region offer permanent positions to interns upon satisfactory completion of the

probationary period and/or successful completion of the rehabilitation counseling graduate degree.

Through collaborative initiatives with higher education institutions, OVR will continue to expand recruitment and outreach to students with disabilities for entry-level VRC positions. Collaboration with universities on federal RSA grant applications that seek to provide scholarship opportunities for students with disabilities will further this initiative. This includes supporting the efforts of university programs to apply for and implement Long Term Training Grant programs to train VRCs to work for the public VR program in Pennsylvania. In addition, OVR will continue the following activities as part of its overall VRC recruitment initiative:

- continuing to build and maintain relationships with all CORE/CACREP program coordinators at graduate training programs, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) that offer rehabilitation counseling disciplines. This includes campus visits, onsite presentations, use of telecommunication technology, and one-on-one meetings with students for targeted recruitment. OVR has established relationships with the following HBCU's nationwide: Alabama State University, University of the District of Columbia, Fort Valley State University, Southern University and A&M College, Coppin State University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, North Carolina A&T State University, Winston-Salem State University, and South Carolina State University. OVR will also continue to build relationships with program coordinators at graduate training programs in Puerto Rico who offer rehabilitation counseling disciplines including Bayamon Central University, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, and the University of Puerto Rico;
- maintaining appointed membership on Coppin State University and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore Rehabilitation Counseling Program Advisory Committees. Both are HBCUs in the Mid-Atlantic region that prepare increased numbers of minority individuals for careers in the public VR program. OVR will also maintain a membership commitment to local advisory committees with Edinboro University;
- maintaining active membership with the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC) and the National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE); and
- visiting colleges, universities, and appropriate job fairs in conjunction with the DLI Office of Equal Opportunity to recruit potential job applicants who are from diverse cultural backgrounds and applicants with disabilities.

#### Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Vision Rehabilitation Therapists

OVR recruits from accredited university programs in Pennsylvania that train Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists and/or Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (VRTs), including: Salus University, the University of Pittsburgh's Vision Studies Program, and Kutztown University. These programs graduate a combined total of approximately 35 students per year. Graduates of these approved university programs are eligible for certification in Vision Rehabilitation Therapy or in O&M from the Academy for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals. In addition, OVR is able to recruit and hire VRTs and O&M Specialists who are being trained at universities nationwide and who reside outside of Pennsylvania.

OVR's Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) continues to offer paid internships for O&M and VRT students during their last semester of study. The O&M and VRT hourly wage is equivalent to the VRC Intern at Group 5 Step 1. This initiative will continue to increase the candidate pool of available O&M and VRT professionals who are available for employment with OVR BBVS upon successful completion of their academic training.

## VRC Trainee

As of May 1, 2021, OVR decided to discontinue the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee (VRCT) position. The decision to discontinue this position was determined on the low number of applicants and the inability to retain these positions successfully.

### 3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

#### A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), requires State VR agencies establish personnel standards for rehabilitation staff, including VRCs, that are consistent with any national or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing or registration that applies to a particular profession. The purpose of an agency's CSPD is to ensure the quality of personnel who provide VR services and who assist individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive employment outcomes through the VR program.

## New VRCs

In 2002, OVR raised the entry-level requirements for VRC positions to reflect the requirements established by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC's). Specifically, all newly hired VRCs are required to possess a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Rehabilitation Administration or Rehabilitation Education, or CRC credentials or documented proof from CRCC of eligibility to obtain CRC credentials. The revised Pennsylvania Civil Service Announcement for VRC positions became effective on October 4, 2002. As of May 2019, a total of 846 VRCs and VRC Interns were hired under the new entry-level requirements. All 856 new VRCs and Interns met CSPD standards for qualified rehabilitation professionals upon being hired.

On July 1, 2017, all CORE programs merged under CACREP. The intent of this merger is to assure students receive appropriate counseling coursework, streamline state counseling licensing processes, and increase skill development while improving employment opportunities. Currently, universities are increasing graduation requirements from 48 credits to 60 credits to include Traditional Rehabilitation Counseling, Clinical Rehabilitation and Clinical Mental Health counseling. The students graduating from these programs should have better developed skills in counseling techniques and applications which will lead to increased employment opportunities in both public and private sectors of vocational rehabilitation. While a benefit to the student, there is concern of unintended negative consequences for the state VR agencies if more

graduates from these programs consider applying their skills in the private sector vs. public sector.

Currently, OVR is maintaining its primary standards in hiring candidates with a Master's Degree in the mentioned fields; however, OVR is strongly considering a review of the current Minimum Education and Training (METs) for the entry level VRC as it relates to the CACREP standards.

As a result of the CORE/CACREP merger, OVR has been working with the PA Office of Administration (OA) in redesigning its recruitment plan for hiring master level qualified candidates. Within this redesign, and following RSA standard (34 CFR §361.18(c)(2)(A)(1), OVR is in the final stages of working to revamp our METs requirements in the hope of expanding our candidate pool and allow us to decrease our vacancies in addition to increasing our visibility amongst all CORE/CACREP programs nationwide. OVR and OA are cross-referencing all CORE/CACREP master level correlated programs regarding the expansion of our entry level VRC positions that will include more degree options: Social Work, Human Services, School Counseling, Clinical Counseling and others considered closely related. All efforts are mission critical to support our district offices and give the ability to maintain work-life balance for our employees.

OVR continues to provide the following recruitment incentives for VRCs:

- A Designated Recruitment Specialist actively recruits qualified VRC's, including those with disabilities, individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, and underrepresented groups, and from all CORE/CACREP programs nationwide. The Recruitment Specialist has developed a plan that will continue to be proactive in adequately supplying VRCs trained to provide services to specialty caseloads such as Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Counselors for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- OVR continues to support the recruitment and hiring incentive for the southeastern district offices in Norristown and Philadelphia regarding the increase in pay scale for VRC Interns and Counselors at a Pay Scale 5, Step 9 for interns and Pay Scale 7, Step 5 for counselors.

**B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.**

OVR ensures that personnel have a 21st-century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities through staff training, professional development and continuing education on Labor Management Information (LMI) and trends. Training and continuing education is also provided on assessment, rehabilitation technology, Social Security work incentive programs, including programs under the Ticket to Work and the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, facilitation of informed choice under this program, and improving provision of services to culturally diverse populations.

OVR continues its plan to enhance professional growth and skills of staff on emerging practices relevant to job readiness/soft skill competencies, job search skills, transferrable skills, when to disclose a disability to an employer, how to address criminal history, how to request an accommodation, tax credits, OJT, and resources that focus on developing effective relationships

with employers in the public and private sectors. To train and retain qualified personnel, OVR will continue to provide training by university faculty, experts in the field of rehabilitation, and statewide and nationally known speakers on understanding the medical and psychosocial aspects of various disabilities, case management, best practices on developing effective relationships with employers, and understanding the effective utilization of rehabilitation technology.

To increase understanding of the needs of individuals with disabilities, OVR will continue to work collaboratively with local community colleges, career and technical schools to explore the development of training programs that are implemented with universal design to train individuals with disabilities for competitive integrated employment in jobs that meet local labor market demand. In addition to VRCs, OVR's expanded rehabilitation team includes Business Services Representatives (BSRs) and Early Reach Coordinators (ERCs). ERCs promote successful outcomes for students and youth with disabilities by increasing awareness of OVR services and the benefits of early career planning beginning at age 14. BSRs represent OVR and our customer talent during outreach to employers and businesses throughout the geographic area of their assignments to develop job opportunities and foster good working relationships with the business community. A subset of BSRs focus on employer engagement related to transition and pre-employment transition services.

#### 4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

OVR is committed to offering a plan for a comprehensive system of staff development and training. The goal is to ensure staff development for OVR personnel in areas essential to the effective management of OVR's program of VR services. OVR will continue to provide for the training and development of personnel necessary to improve their ability to provide VR services leading to employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities.

With the implementation of WIOA amendment to the Rehabilitation Act, overall training areas include: (1) Functional Limitations, Employment Implications, and Accommodations; (2) Vocational Assessment: Tools, Interpretation, and Application; (3) Counseling and Guidance; (4) Caseload Management, Case Practices, and Service Planning; (5) Employer Engagement, Job Development and Job Placement; (6) Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Competency; and (7) Leadership Development.

OVR routinely schedules trainings based on updates to policies and procedures to ensure staff have accurate and up to date information regarding job duties. Recent collaboration occurred with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) at the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University to offer all OVR employees the opportunity to participate in a staff training needs assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to identify where the greatest needs are for staff training so that OVR can identify and develop resources to meet those training needs. In addition, OVR will continue to develop and complete an internal survey to determine additional training needs identified by professional and paraprofessional staff. OVR is committed to focusing on certain priorities

identified as “Customer Service,” “Ethics,” “Confidentiality,” and “Transition” as they relate to the primary training topics outlined by WIOA.

OVR also refers employees, as needed, to Temple University’s Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL). This is a program facilitated through the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, “TechOWL”. ATLL is Pennsylvania’s statewide program under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act. Activities that are provided by ATLL are: device demonstrations; device lending; device reuse; public awareness activities; and trainings to raise awareness and knowledge of assistive technology (AT) topics. Any of these activities are available to Pennsylvanians with disabilities which includes OVR staff and clients, often at no charge.

OVR continues to collaborate with Penn State University on the 2018-2020 Diversity & Inclusion Project. The research for this initiative has been completed as of March 3, 2019. All focus groups, key informant interviews and statewide assessments have been concluded as of December 2018. All data has been reviewed and compiled, and a written report with recommendations was submitted to the OVR Executive Team and prospective unions in early April 2019. The recommendations will serve as a framework for professional trainings for advancing OVR’s diversity and inclusion goals. These trainings will define: the concept of diversity and inclusion; understanding barriers for underrepresented/underserved populations; an outline of the value and importance of diversity and inclusion; and provide substantial resources for our staff in providing services to the communities we serve.

#### **B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.**

OVR employs a training specialist who monitors trends in both training and rehabilitation, including participation in a Community of Practice under the Center for Innovative Training in Vocational Rehabilitation (CIT-VR), sharing various training opportunities from other partnerships.

In addition, OVR will capitalize on the in-house expertise offered by existing agency staff to share policy and procedure updates and information about best practices with their colleagues through webinar training opportunities. OVR’s internal subject matter experts receive guidance from various technical assistance centers including the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (NTACT:C) and the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM).

OVR supports various training opportunities and coordinates efforts with various professional associations such as the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association, Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns, Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Association and the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired to train and retain qualified personnel. These external organizations frequently focus on evidence-based practices and current trends in their areas of subject matter expertise.

#### **5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS**

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

Most OVR district offices have at least one Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population. Entry-level requirements for Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing require that candidates pass the Sign Language Proficiency Interview before offered a formal interview for employment. OVR district offices, in geographic areas where there are large numbers of individuals who speak Spanish, recruit and hire VRC who can speak both Spanish and English. In instances where there are no VRCs who can communicate with a customer in his or her native language, an interpreter is hired to assist with communication.

To illustrate inclusivity, OVR employees can access services through a language line phone service that provides interpreting and translation services in more than 200 languages. When a customer is identified as needing translation services, the OVR employee will contact the translation service organization to arrange for services to begin and inform the customer of how the service will work. This service is utilized as a resource for customers and staff who serve a high concentration of underrepresented/underserved populations.

OVR plans to continue efforts to work with the blind and deaf communities to recruit and hire qualified individuals who are deaf, blind, deaf-blind and hard of hearing. This includes recommendations and assistance provided by the OVR Advisory Committee for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Advisory Committee for the Blind of Pennsylvania. In addition, OVR has a Rehabilitation Specialist assigned to coordinate the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind Program in OVR. This specialist assists with recruitment and outreach to these populations to attract qualified OVR candidates for employment.

Additionally, OVR has incorporated 2016-2018 CSNA recommendations and strategies to develop stronger awareness among OVR staff of the cultural and linguistic differences and needs for individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minorities. Specifically, OVR will increase training in culturally competent strategies for serving these communities. OVR will strive to provide more staff, materials, resources and services in languages other than English, which may be the dominate languages of some individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minority communities, as well as refugee communities.

#### **6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT**

Transition Counselors and ERCs within OVR work regularly with educators in local school districts who are working under IDEA. Training on OVR's Transition policy is provided for the benefit of new counselors and ERCs with the intention of helping them to understand their role within both VR and IDEA.

The OVR Transition Resource Manual supports this policy and is available as a reference for all OVR staff. Updates and additions are made as necessary.

#### **J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT**

##### **1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:**

**A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;**

OVR contracted with the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, Pennsylvania's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, to conduct and interpret the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) required for PY 2015-2018. This is the most recent completed assessment. The purpose of the CSNA is to inform OVR and PaRC regarding issues and needs of the disability community in the commonwealth. Specific requirements of the CSNA can be found in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, at Section 101(a)(15) and at federal regulation 34 CFR § 361.29. The CSNA is required to be completed every three years and assists OVR and PaRC in the development of the State Plan. Section 361.29 of the regulations outlines the specific topics to examine, including specific populations and the cooperation of stakeholders and providers.

A steering committee comprised of OVR staff, members of PaRC, and the Client Assistance Program participated in an initial meeting to review and approve customer satisfaction surveys. These participants remained as vital collaborators in the development and review phases of the CSNA process.

OVR initiated a new CSNA project for 2019-2022, again with the Institute on Disabilities, Temple University. This new project was initially affected and temporarily slowed by the Covid-19 pandemic, but innovative thinking and creative planning have helped to move the project back on track to meet projected deadlines for a final report expected before September 2022. This is also a collaborative effort with the PaRC, whose members received quarterly updates on the progress of the project, along with OVR Leadership, and the OVR State Board Members. Findings from this new CSNA project will be included in the development of the next VR Services Portion of the Combined State Plan expected to be drafted in 2023-2024.

**Comparison of Pennsylvania to National Population Statistics**

See information in the chart below, taken from the CSNA report, represents the estimated percentage of individuals in various age, sex, and race/ethnicity categories that have generalized disability identifications in Pennsylvania and across the nation in 2014 and 2016 (2014 and 2016 1-Year Estimates of the American Community survey).

***Table 2: Comparison of Pennsylvania to National Population Statistics***

Disability Identification across demographic variables	U.S. % Est (2014)	U.S. % Est (2015)	U.S. % Est (2016)	U.S. % Est (2017)	PA % Est (2014)	PA % Est (2015)	PA % Est (2016)	PA % Est (2017)
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population	12.6	12.6	12.8	12.7	13.8	13.9	14.2	14.1
Population under 5 years	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9



Disability Identification across demographic variables	U.S. % Est (2014)	U.S. % Est (2015)	U.S. % Est (2016)	U.S. % Est (2017)	PA % Est (2014)	PA % Est (2015)	PA % Est (2016)	PA % Est (2017)
Population 5 to 17 years	5.4	5.4	5.6	5.5	7.1	6.8	7.1	7.0
Population 18 to 34 years	10.5	6.0	6.3	6.4	11.2	6.9	7.3	7.0
Population 35 to 64 years	10.5	13.0	13.1	12.7	11.2	13.8	14.2	13.9
Population 65 years to 74 years	36.0	25.4	25.3	25.0	34.6	24.0	24.6	24.0
Population 75 years and older	36.0	49.8	49.5	48.7	34.6	47.9	48	47.9
Male	12.5	12.5	12.7	12.6	13.6	13.4	14.1	13.8
Female	12.8	12.7	12.9	12.8	14.0	14.3	14.4	14.4
White alone	13.1	13.1	13.4	13.3	13.8	13.8	14.3	14.1
Black or African American alone	13.8	14.0	14.1	14.0	15.5	16.6	16.0	16.6
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	16.3	16.8	17.0	17.3	24.6	24.8	23.8	20.8
Asian alone	6.9	6.9	7.1	7.1	6.3	7.1	7.0	7.0
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone	-	10.6	11.1	10.3	-	27.7	N	N
Some other race alone	8.2	8.0	8.3	8.0	16.0	13.6	14.0	12.7
Two or more races	11.1	10.9	11.3	11.1	13.5	11.4	13.5	13.0
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	13.9	13.9	14.1	14.0	13.8	13.8	14.4	14.2
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	8.8	8.8	9.1	9.0	14.3	14.1	14.0	12.7

Source: 2015-2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Compared to the estimated national rate of disability identification in 2014 (12.6%), 2015 (12.6%), 2016 (12.8%), and 2017 (12.7%), Pennsylvania has a slightly higher rate of disability identification in its total civilian population (13.8% in 2014, 13.9% in 2015, 14.2% in 2016, and 14.1% in 2017). Up until 2014, the Census reported upon disability identification for those 18-64 years old (10.5% in U.S. and 11.2% in Pennsylvania) and 65 and older (36.0% in US and 34.6% in Pennsylvania). Beginning in 2015, the Census began reporting disability identification rates for 18-34 years old, 35-64 years old, 65-74 years old, and 75 years and older. In 2015,

Pennsylvania civilians ages 18-34 and 35-64 years had a slightly higher than national average rate of disability identification (Pennsylvania: 6.9% and 13.8% vs. U.S.: 6.0% and 13.0%). This trend continued in 2016, with Pennsylvania civilians ages 18-34 years old (Pennsylvania: 7.3% vs. US: 6.3%) and 35-64 years old (Pennsylvania: 14.2% vs. U.S.: 13.1%) and in 2017 with, Pennsylvania Civilians ages 18-34 years old (Pennsylvania: 7.0% vs. US: 6.4%) and 35-64 years old (Pennsylvania: 13.9% and US:12.7%).

The estimated percentage of individuals who identified as having a disability in the labor force was 40.7% nationally, compared to 40.9% in Pennsylvania. The national average of individuals identifying as having a disability who were employed in 2014 was 34.5%, and 34.7% in Pennsylvania. The rate of unemployment for individuals with disabilities across the United States was 14.9%, compared to 15.1% in Pennsylvania in 2014 (American Community Survey, 2014).

Customer satisfaction surveys were developed as part of the CSNA to determine future VR needs of those customers with the most significant disabilities and their need for SE services. These surveys were designed and used to elicit feedback from customers in Status 26 Closed Rehabilitated, Status 28 Closed after IPE Initiated, Transition Services for youth and students with disabilities, and for those currently undergoing job coaching. Data collected from these surveys will be used to demonstrate successes in, and barriers to, receiving OVR services and gaining and retaining employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities. It will be up to OVR to review these surveys on a regular basis to gather this information. Data collected from these surveys is currently reviewed on a quarterly basis between OVR and PaRC (during Customer Satisfaction Committee meetings) to determine successes in, and barriers to, receiving OVR services and gaining and retaining employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

#### B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, and evaluated as part of the CSNA, 81.8% of Pennsylvanians with disabilities identify as Caucasian or white; 12.4% of Pennsylvanians with a disability identify as African American; 6.2% of Pennsylvanians with disabilities identify as Hispanic or Latino; 0.3% of Pennsylvanians with a disability identify as American Indian and Alaska Native; and 1.4% Pennsylvanians with a disability identify as Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Additional qualitative data was collected as part of the CSNA through site visits to district offices and face-to-face interviews with VR administrators. During these interviews, OVR staff suggested that a lack of English fluency had not presented significant barriers to ethnic and cultural minorities in receiving services and supports in Pennsylvania. Administrators and VRCs at multiple district offices cited familiarity with and access to Language Line interpretation services, but infrequent need to use the service. According to the October 2015 Census Report "Detailed Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over for Pennsylvania: 2009-2013," only about four percent of those individuals reportedly speak English less than "very well." Consequently, lack of utilization of interpretation services may align with statewide language demographics, but may also signal a population underserved by OVR. Attention to this potential disparity is imperative as multiple VRCs identified that they served refugee communities, many of which come from countries with official languages other than English. Findings were that OVR staff could benefit from trainings oriented to cultural competency regarding the Pennsylvania Dutch, Amish, and Quaker populations, as well as refugees. Related training is being considered and will be developed in the near future.

#### C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The most recently completed CSNA found that individuals with disabilities that are considered unserved and/or underserved in Pennsylvania include those with multiple disabilities (such as deaf/blind), those in rural areas, transition age youth, individuals with disabilities that are concurrently customers of other state systems (such as corrections, educational, and/or other human services systems), minorities, and veterans. Survey results from CRPs indicated that the most underserved communities, in order of significance, are customers with dual diagnoses, followed by aging customers, those in the criminal justice system (victims, defenders or parolees), those with low socioeconomic status, immigrants, and non-English speaking or English as a second language customers. Youth were ranked as the least underserved, followed by veterans, rural communities, racial or ethnic minorities, and finally state center residents.

Many individuals reported difficulty accessing reliable transportation services that affects their ability to attend job training programs, job interviews, and to consistently get to and from a work site.

#### D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

OVR staff work closely with our PA CareerLink partners in the State Workforce Development System. CareerLink offices are one-stop facilities in Pennsylvania that assists individuals seeking Commonwealth and employment services, and where workforce development professionals focus on employment with an emphasis on high demand occupations. Information gathered from the CSNA indicates that although OVR and the Statewide Workforce Development System work collaboratively, have similar goals, and are cross-purposed, the CareerLink targets occupations of high demand where OVR targets customers' employment goals. It's suggested that in order to best serve the dual customer, VRCs may benefit from receiving cross-training on high demand occupations. It's also suggested that since the CareerLinks and OVR gather the same information on a customer, these programs can benefit from policies that facilitate better data sharing.

#### E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

In the CSNA, transportation was cited by OVR customers, family members of individuals with disabilities, employers, and OVR staff members as the most important need/barrier for youth and students to access employment and job training services.

During the CSNA cycle, OVR, in collaboration with PaRC, developed and began using a customer satisfaction survey for transition age youth. These surveys are sent out to randomly selected transition age youth on a monthly basis. OVR reviews the results of these surveys and shares this information with the PaRC and OVR leadership. An informal review of the responses is currently being done on a quarterly basis by OVR staff and PaRC during PaRC Policy and Customer Satisfaction Committee meetings. Information received through this review highlights the important role communication plays in the relationship between counselor, the student, their family, and the education system. Transportation services and communication with transition age youth and their families will be an important focus for OVR staff working with this population.

#### 2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

According to results in the CSNA, through DLI, there are currently 106 certified CRPs operating in Pennsylvania, placing the commonwealth in the 94<sup>th</sup> percentile of number of established CRPs throughout the United States. As of August 2017, Pennsylvania ranks only below Ohio, Illinois, and California. CRPs are private, community-based, non-profit organizations that provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. While Pennsylvania is fortunate to have a sufficient number of CRPs, there were gaps in services noted from the CSNA. One of the greatest needs identified by the CSNA is the lack of transportation services for individuals with disabilities, especially for those living in rural communities. Some of the specific barriers identified include: lack of flexibility with scheduling and planning for para-transit services; lack of reliability and consistency with para-transit services; lack of cultural competency and awareness for disability on the part of transportation workers; a general assumption that people with disabilities have no interest in employment or being active; and lack of institutional or societal interest or investment in transportation for people with disabilities.

Interagency referrals are another area identified as a problem for individuals with disabilities seeking services from multiple agencies. The referral process for each organization or CRP in Pennsylvania is different and can be overwhelming for individuals with disabilities. There is a workgroup currently facilitated through the PA Workforce Development System, which OVR participates in, that is looking at ways to improve co-enrollment across funding streams.

The Hiram G. Andrews Center is the State-owned and operated comprehensive rehabilitation center in Pennsylvania, similar to a community rehabilitation program, they provide necessary vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. HGAC provides a comprehensive program of services including the integration of pre-employment transition services, education on campus at the Commonwealth Technical Institute, vocational counseling, vocational evaluation, and physical restoration in a barrier free environment for individuals with disabilities leading to competitive integrated employment. In order to keep the center operational and ensure continuity of service provision, at times it is necessary for the State to repair or replace systems and equipment within the center, including, but not limited to: electrical, plumbing and hot water, fire prevention, ventilation, sewage, etc., that go beyond ordinary repairs and maintenance. The State will submit requests for prior approval to RSA for related costs that exceed the capital expenditure threshold used by the State.

### **3. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT**

As part of the 2015-2018 CSNA, The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University researchers used surveys and interviews with workforce professionals to identify barriers to and strategies for increasing services and support opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. Ten people responded to this survey and six individuals from six distinct organizations working within Pennsylvania were interviewed. All respondents reported they provide work-based learning experiences, with 7/10 offering workplace readiness training and job shadowing, followed by 30% offering self-advocacy training, 20% offering job exploration counseling and post-secondary counseling and enrollment, and finally 1 respondent offering independent living skills training. The researchers offered positive feedback that Pre-ETS services introduces eligible and potentially eligible students to VR services and supports earlier, and subsequently engage students in the VR intake process sooner and often with more direct school support. Some of the needs and barriers identified relate to the engagement of students and schools, including scheduling time with students, challenges related to the VR intake process, students' transition timeline, and inadequate family support. The CSNA recommendation is that OVR

work to develop more holistic and equitable relationships and communication with school districts across the commonwealth to grow quality, selection, and knowledgeability of pre-employment transition services options and to improve access and connection to the workforce development system under WIOA.

More specifically, it was suggested that educational and VR professionals collaborate better and more frequently to provide post-secondary education counseling and enrollment assistance to students with disabilities. Additionally, there were some inconsistencies across VR offices related to intake protocol, wait times, and messaging can impede Pre-ETS service provision. OVR is working on improving the standardization of practice among district offices to improve service delivery to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

CSNA interviewees also cited it's essential that schools make the connection between students and OVR. OVR's presence in schools, as part of a network of service providers including the special education coordinator, teachers, paraprofessionals, and aids, and active registration of students, improves student outcomes. Fortunately, OVR has a regular and strong presence of ERC's, Transition Counselors, BSRs, and VRCs who visit and interact with local school districts on a consistent basis. Since the implementation of WIOA, these relationships have continued to strengthen and OVR is considered an important ally in transition planning. OVR staff attend IEP meetings, meet with students and parents individually, and provide a wide array of pre-employment transition services per the WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. Pre-employment services to students have significantly increased from the time of the prior CSNA to present and are expected to continue to be elevated in the next CSNA cycle.

Over the next two years using information from the CSNA assessments, OVR will be evaluating the need, and considering establishing agreements with the following governmental entities: PA Department of Education, DLI Apprenticeship Office, agreements with 10 local Work Force Development Boards, an agreement with the Commonwealth's Office of Administration, and an agreement with Human Resources within the Office of Administration.

An MOU is being developed between OVR and the PA Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education to increase engagement of students with the most significant disabilities. The MOU will enable the creation of a Transition Employment & Agency Mentor – Navigators (Team Navigator) within each Intermediate Unit (IU). OVR, subject to availability of funds, will jointly provide funding over four (4) years to be used exclusively for the operation and administration of technical assistance.

An agreement is being considered with the DLI Apprenticeship Office for the use of matching funds to promote pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathways for OVR customers that will allow them to achieve quality employment outcomes at high wages.

In addition, OVR will explore the development of agreements with 10 local Workforce Development Boards under the Commonwealth's Workforce Development Program to pilot a jointly-funded Disability Employment Initiative that will allow the creation of disability navigators to work closely with OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to serve students, youth, and adults with disabilities.

OVR will also explore an agreement with the Commonwealth's Office of Administration to develop accessibility testing through the use of Information Technology Accommodation Personnel throughout all OVR combined District Offices. Accessibility testing verifies that digital content and services are usable by people with disabilities. Information Technology Accommodation Personnel will also coach, mentor, and train others who are learning to do accessibility testing.

Finally, OVR will explore an agreement with Human Resources within the Office of Administration for the development of a Career Transition Professional (CTP). The CTP may serve as the Commonwealth of PA Employer Single Point of Contact (SPOC) in the recruitment, retention, and onboarding of all individuals with disabilities that meet the employer identified requirements for employment.

#### K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

##### 1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

According to the 2017 Disability Status Report for Pennsylvania published by Cornell University's Institute on Employment and Disability, more than 855,000 individuals ages 21 to 64 (working age) in Pennsylvania reported one or more disabilities, representing 11.8% of the working-age population in the state (Source: 2017 Disability Status Report – Pennsylvania, Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability, Cornell University, using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey). In the 2020 Vocational Rehabilitation Highlights, OVR reported that 22,327 students, age 12-21 received Pre-Employment Transition Services from OVR in PY 2019.

##### 2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

###### A. THE VR PROGRAM;

PY 2020: 46,596. \*The actual number of OVR customers in all categories who received services in PY 2020 was 43, 538. The original projection was made pre-Covid.

PY 2021: 48,455 (actual through 4/14/2022). Effective July 2, 2021 OVR again opened the closed Order of Selection based on a positive financial outlook. As a result, referrals from the PA Office of Developmental Programs and the PA Office of Long-Term Living are expected to increase. This number (48,455) is higher than anticipated due to moving customers from the Order of Selection and will likely return to a more typical number in future program years.

PY 2022: 46,000. OVR is hopeful to return to pre-Covid-19 service provision levels as the commonwealth continues to advance out from under Covid restrictions.

PY 2023: 46,600. This estimate is based on demographic trends of Pennsylvania population growth (-.03% over the next decade) and age characteristics (population age 60 and older expected to increase from 25.5% of the population to 27.7% from 2020-2030). Source

###### B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The following estimates project the number of individuals expected to be served annually during PYs 2021-2024 for each of the priority categories within the SE Program (Title I and Title VI Funds):

Total anticipated to be served annually during PYs 2021-2024: 5,463

Annual estimates of the number of SE customers to be served and projected Title VI expenditures during PYs 2021-2024:

- Anticipated Total Number to be Served annually via Title VI Funds: 245
- Anticipated Annual Expenditure – Title VI Funds: \$600,000
- Total Number Served annually under Age 25 via Title VI Funds: 245
- Anticipated Annual Expenditure – Title VI Funds (under age 25): \$600,000

Annual estimates of the number of SE customers to be served and projected Title I expenditures during PYs 2021-2024:

- Anticipated Total Number to be Served annually via Title I Funds: 5,343
- Anticipated Annual Expenditure – Title I Funds: \$8,318,140

#### C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

Effective July 1, 2021 OVR opened the closed Order of Selection based on a positive financial outlook. As a result, referrals from the PA Office of Developmental Program and the PA Office of Long-Term Living are expected to increase. This number is higher than anticipated due to moving customers from the Order of Selection and will likely return to a more typical number in future program years. As of 4/15/2022, six individuals classified with most significant disability (MSD) and twenty-seven individuals classified with non-significant disability (NSD) remain on the waiting list.

**PY 2021: MSD = 6, SD = 0, NSD = 27**

**PY 2022: MSD = 3, SD = 0, NSD = 27**

**PY 2023: MSD = 0, SD = 0, BSD = 27**

#### 3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

OVR closed the OOS for all priority categories effective July 1, 2019. As of the end of PY 2019, there were a total of 3,010 customers eligible for VR services who were on a waitlist and not receiving such services due to the closing of the OOS: 2,097 designated as Most Significant Disability, 100 designated as Significant Disability, and 3 designated as Non-Significant Disability. At the end of PY 2020, there were a total of 9,244 customers eligible for VR services who were on a waitlist and not receiving such services due to the closing of the OOS: 8,459 designated as Most Significant Disability, 739 designated as Significant Disability, and 46 as Non-Significant Disability. As of July 26, 2021 6,578 customers eligible for VR services who were on a waitlist and not receiving such services due to the closing of the OOS: 6,071 designated as Most Significant Disability, 484 designated as Significant Disability, and 23 designated as Non-Significant Disability.

On July 1, 2021 OVR opened the closed Order of Selection for all priority categories for an indefinite period of time based on a positive financial availability. OVR had sent a letter to all eligible individuals who were still on the waitlist asking them to contact their vocational counselor to initiate services. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are also asked to make strong attempts to reach out to any customer who is still on the waitlist but has not yet initiated contact for services. It is anticipated that all eligible individuals will be removed from this waitlist by the end of PY 2021.

#### 4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

1. For the Most Significant Disability category, the number projected to be made eligible is 11,000 for PY 2021, and 17,000 for PY 2022 and 2023. The number served will be 45,000 for 2022. The number rehabilitated will be 7,000, of which 100% will be rehabilitated into the competitive labor market. The total cost of services is expected to be approximately \$45,000,000. For PY 2023, The number served will be 45,550. The number rehabilitated will be 7,500, of which 100% will be rehabilitated into the competitive labor market. The total cost of services is expected to be approximately \$45,550,000.
2. For the Significant Disability (SD) category, the number projected to be eligible for services for PY 2022 is 1,000. The total cost for services is expected to be approximately \$1,000,000. For PY 2023, the projected number of eligible SD individuals is 1,050 with a total cost for services expected as \$1,050,000.
3. For the Non-Significant Disability category, the number projected to be made eligible annually is 0, while the number served will be 12. OVR does not anticipate opening the Non-Significant Disability category to receive services during the next four years. The number of individuals in this category will decrease to 0 as cases are closed. Expenditures under this category will be negligible and isolated to services provided for the currently open cases, outreach, processing of new applications, and eligibility determinations.

#### L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

The state goals and priorities for the VR Services Portion of the Pennsylvania Combined State Plan were initially developed jointly with OVR Executive staff and the PaRC Policy and State Plan committee during a teleconference meeting exchange on May 10, 2019. Another virtual meeting was held on April 28, 2021 between members of the PaRC Policy/Executive Committees and OVR Leadership to review updates for the 2-year modification of the VR Services Portion of the State Plan. A minor addition was made to goal #2, subgoal 3. Any projections, program continuations, etc. in this description are subject to the availability of funding in the plan year.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

#### **Goal 1: Increase Competitive Integrated Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities**

1. Expand the availability of apprenticeships, internships and OJT for individuals with disabilities.
2. Partner with the BWPO and individual local CareerLink administration bodies to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility of the PA CareerLink centers for equal access for individuals with disabilities.
3. Increase SE and Customized Employment outcomes; evaluate and monitor OVR's SE policy implementation.

#### **Goal 2: Increase Transition Services for Students with Disabilities**

1. Develop summer and after school Pre-ETS programming to prepare Students with Disabilities for a seamless transition from secondary school to CIE.



2. Increase opportunities for students to gain workplace skills and community-integrated work experiences.
3. Enhance collaborative relationships with Department of Human Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education, higher education institutions, the PA Employment First Oversight Commission, and Community Rehabilitation Providers.

**Goal 3: Increase Community Education and Outreach.**

1. Work with PaRC to identify and incorporate best practices and strategies to increase Customer Satisfaction survey response data.
2. Continue to develop stronger awareness among OVR staff of the cultural and linguistic differences and needs of unserved/underserved individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minorities.
3. Promote accessibility and technology based upon universal design principles.

**Goal 4: Initiate and Complete Capital Improvement Projects at HGAC.**

1.
  - a.
    - i.
      1. Invest in the replacement and repair of end-of-life systems and structure within the Hiram G. Andrews Center, including but not limited to building automation replacement, security cameras replacement and upgrade, phone system upgrade, campus-wide public restroom remodel, roof repairs, air handlers and cooling tower replacement and the repair to a failing ADA ramp/egress.
      2. Increase opportunities for students through capital projects, including new classrooms, upgrades to existing classrooms and updated campus features.
      3. Promote accessibility and technology through capital improvements based on universal design principles.
      4. Expand the availability of services and education offered through the Hiram G. Andrews Center.
      5. Phased renovation of the dormitories at the Hiram G. Andrews Center

The 2016-2018 CSNA identified transportation barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities as a significant challenge across Pennsylvania. While OVR leadership and the PaRC Policy/Executive Committee did not develop a specific goal and priorities in this State Plan, over the past two years OVR has initiated activity to help improve transportation opportunities for both adults and students with disabilities. OVR recognizes that transportation from home to a job is paramount to employment success. Transportation for individuals with disabilities in both urban and rural areas across Pennsylvania requires innovative solutions. Historically, implementation of transportation initiatives has proven challenging due to the diverse nature of the state and the significant costs often associated with transportation. It is OVR's obligation to ensure that customers can attend assessments, meet with OVR staff, and participate in services

if they do not have the financial means to do so. Section 103(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Act), as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and corresponding federal regulations at 34 CFR 361.48(b)(8) permit OVR to provide transportation service to eligible individuals with disabilities throughout the VR process. To maximize existing resources, District Office (DO) staff will collaborate with existing transportation providers to develop services based on DO needs. Transportation providers will transport customers or assist DO staff in connecting customers to transportation services. There may be multiple transportation programs collaborating with a district office, based upon the needs of the community.

In addition, OVR has dedicated a VR Specialist who participates in a variety of statewide meetings/initiatives that are dedicated to exploring the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities and identifying community-based solutions to meet these needs.

### 3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

#### A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

These goals were developed using the 2016-2018 CSNA which included targeted goal areas on: customer satisfaction; increasing services and support opportunities for students and youth with disabilities; identifying barriers and strategies to improve services to the broad spectrum of ethnic and cultural minorities with disabilities; development of more holistic and equitable relationships and communication with school districts across Pennsylvania; and supporting the use of new technology to benefit customer service.

#### B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of States and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce development system's six core programs, one of which is vocational rehabilitation programs.

These Performance Indicators are:

1. Employment Rate, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit - The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
2. Employment Rate, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit - The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
3. Median Earnings, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit - The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after employment from the program.
4. Credential Attainment - The percentage of participants enrolled in an approved education or training program who attain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent during participation or within one year of exit. Participants must have exited the program to be counted as having

attained a credential. Additionally, those earning secondary school diplomas must either be employed or enrolled in a postsecondary program to be counted. Baseline data upon which PA OVR will be evaluated was collected in PY2020.

5. Measurable Skill Gains – The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment. The definition of allowable types of measurable skills games is specified by RSA and depends on the type of program in which the customers is enrolled.
6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers – This Performance indicator is currently under joint development by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education. It will eventually consider a combination of reportable information such as retention with the same employer, the number of businesses that repeatedly hire program participants, and the degree to which program participants are represented across the full range of employers in the state economy. Federal baselines have not yet been established for this indicator and is currently not reported in the annual RSA ETA-9169 report for the state.

Using guidance received in TAC-22-02 related to performance goals and instructions for the core programs, OVR will be establishing these measures and negotiating with RSA to confirm expected performance levels.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

OVR was the subject of an RSA monitoring visit in August 2019 and received its subsequent Monitoring Report from RSA on 11/13/2020. The report contained six findings and sixteen related corrective actions to be addressed by OVR. OVR submitted its initial Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to RSA on 1/12/2021. On 7/28/2021 OVR's CAP update for the quarter ended 6/30/2021 was forwarded to RSA for review/comment. RSA replied on 8/20/2021, noting that OVR had successfully resolved four corrective actions, as well as partially resolving an additional four corrective actions. OVR's next quarterly update is due to RSA by 10/31/2021.

OVR received a letter dated May 20, 2019, from PaRC expressing their concern about the closing of the Most Significant Disability category of the OOS. OVR appreciates and understands this position and is commitment to reviewing the fiscal situation on a quarterly basis and making necessary programmatic and fiscal changes to keep the OOS open, for as long and often as possible, for the Most Significant Disability category.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to implement an Order of Selection. OVR has been on a OOS since March 1, 1994. On July 1, 2019 OVR added the MSD category to be included in the closed Order of Selection. The categories below describe the Order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

**First Priority:** Most Significant Disability; **Second Priority:** Significant Disability; **Third Priority:** Non-Significant Disability.

#### *Description of priority categories*

##### **First Priority:** Most Significant Disability

- The physical, mental, or sensory impairment(s) must seriously limit three or more of the individual's functional capacities; and
  - the individual must be expected to require two or more VR services that are expected to last six months from the date of the IPE or be needed on an ongoing basis to reduce an impediment to employment.

##### **Second Priority:** Significant Disability

- The physical, mental, or sensory impairment(s) must seriously limit one or more of the individual's functional capacities; and
- the individual must be expected to require multiple VR services that are expected to last six months from the date of the IPE or be needed on an ongoing basis to reduce an impediment to employment.

##### **Third Priority:** Non-Significant Disability

- The individual has a physical, mental, or sensory impairment that does not meet the definition for Most Significant Disability or Significant Disability.
- any duration of residency requirement, provided the individual is present in the State;
- type of disability;
- age, gender, race, color or national origin;
- source of referral;
- type of expected employment outcome;
- the need for specific services or anticipated cost of services required by an individual; or
- the income level of an individual or an individual's family.

Pre-Employment Transition Services and the OOS:

Students, families, advocates, and educators are advised to carefully consider the need to begin pre-employment transition services as early as possible in the transition process, and prior to an eligibility determination. Potentially eligible students with disabilities (i.e. students who may or may not have applied for VR services (non-applicants and applicants) that only receive pre-employment transition services) will not be affected by the OOS and will continue to receive pre-employment transition services.

#### B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended, requires that an OOS for services be instituted any time that limited resources impede the agency from providing services to all eligible individuals. The OOS in Pennsylvania gives priority first to individuals with Most Significant Disability; second to individuals with Significant Disability; and third to individuals with Non-Significant Disability.

Since March 1, 1994, OVR has operated under some level of an OOS. From 1994 to 2010, OVR was on an OOS and provided VR services only to customers who had a Most Significant Disability. In October 2010, with the availability and use of ARRA funds, OVR expanded the OOS to include individuals who have a Significant Disability. In 2012, Consistent with OVR's policy on the OOS, OVR evaluated its ability to meet the second priority category and, from a fiscal and programmatic standpoint, OVR determined that it was unable to continue to provide services to individuals with a Significant Disability. On Monday, April 23, 2012, the Significant Disability and Non-Significant Disability categories were closed to all new customers. OVR continued serving only Most Significant Disability customers from 2012 until 2019 when new WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act required that the Designated State Unit must expend at least 15% of a state's federal allocation for VR (which averaged approximately \$20 million annually for OVR) to be set aside for pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities between 14-21 years of age. This reserve resulted in decreased funding being available for other existing programs.

The WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act prohibit restricting the provision of pre-employment transition services, which resulted in Pennsylvania's program enrollment nearly doubling from 13,946 in fiscal year 2016 to 25,601 in fiscal year 2017 – with the cost to provide these services far exceeding the 15% set-aside. OVR has had to invest approximately \$93 million in the program.

Due to a budgetary shortfall in PY 2019, OVR reevaluated its OOS and determined that OVR's available and projected resources would not be adequate to ensure the provision of the full range of VR services to all eligible individuals. OVR consulted with the PaRC at their March 6, 2019 Full Council meeting and with the director of the Client Assistance Program on budgetary concerns, analysis, and the need to seek approval from RSA to close the OOS. This action would result in the establishment of a waiting list for the VR program for all priority categories. At the March 7, 2019 OVR State Board meeting, the Board voted unanimously to allow OVR to proceed with taking necessary steps to close the OOS for all categories.

On July 1, 2019, with approval from RSA, OVR closed priority categories Most Significant Disability, Significant Disability, and Non-Significant Disability. Since this change to the OOS, new customers determined eligible and assigned to a closed priority group are placed on a wait list. The OVR leadership team reviews the fiscal outlook on a quarterly basis to determine when customers could be removed from the list and how many could be removed pending the

availability of funds. The OOS was subsequently opened on the following dates: February 1, 2020, May 1, 2020, August 1, 2020, December 3, 2020, January 4, 2021, April 5, 2021, May 10, 2021, May 24, 2021 and July 1, 2021. As of July 1, 2021 all eligible customers on the wait list were able to be removed from the list. OVR chooses to remain under an OOS option with the opportunity to continue to evaluate the fiscal outlook quarterly and resume the OOS and re-develop the wait list as fiscally found necessary. The decision to retain the OOS option is based on projections in description k. Annual Estimates, and the expectation that as our country experiences an economic recovery post-Covid, indicate that more individuals will once again be seeking employment opportunities and will likely seek vocational rehabilitation services through OVR.

The practice described below is expected to be used if the Order of Selection is closed and a wait list is put in place.

New customers determined eligible and assigned to a closed priority category will be placed on a waiting list until the resources are available to provide the full range of services. OVR will continue to provide pre-employment transition services to potentially eligible students and OVR eligible students who began receiving them prior to eligibility determination and placement in a closed OOS priority category.

1. Individuals applying for services after the date the OOS is closed, will be interviewed and their eligibility and OOS determination will be made. Eligible customers will be placed on a waiting list per category. When financial resources are available, first priority will be given to customers with a Most Significant Disability, second priority to customers with a Significant Disability, and third priority to customers with a Non-Significant Disability. Rationale for placement will appear in the customers case file.
2. Each customer placed on a waiting list will be notified in writing of the priority categories, his or her assignment to a particular priority category classification, and be informed to alert OVR regarding possible reclassifications due to a change in the individual's circumstances or due to any misclassifications. The individual will also be informed of their right to appeal the category assignment through informal or formal review and of the availability of assistance from the Client Assistance Program.
3. For eligible customers who do not have approved IPEs with an effective date prior to being placed on the list and are not in an open priority group:
  - Information and referral services will remain available. Individuals will be given information and referrals to other appropriate Federal and State programs, including programs carried out by other components of the Statewide Workforce Development System, such as the one-stop centers known in the commonwealth as PA CareerLink, best suited to address the specific employment needs of the individual.
  - No IPE will be written to provide such services to these individuals until such time their OOS category opens and they receive notification we can serve them.

#### **Procedure for processing applications:**

1. Upon receipt of referral, counselor meets with applicant to complete application and informs them about OOS and resources that can assist them while they are on the waiting list.

2. Counselor will input data and application date; scan and upload documents in OVR's CWDS database systems and determine eligibility within 60 days from the date of application.
3. After eligibility determinations are made, customers will be assigned to an OOS priority category based on their functional limitations and need for multiple VR services over an extended period of time (currently defined as 6 months).
4. CWDS will add the case to a waiting list in the system, not allowing services to proceed. Notice of such (as outlined above) will be sent to the customer.

**Procedure for putting customers on the waiting list:**

1. For each priority category, customers will be put on the waiting list based upon application date.
2. OVR Central Office will maintain this list through the CWDS.

**Procedure for taking customers off the waiting list:**

1. OVR will determine when to open each category based upon financial availability and will evaluate the ability to open categories quarterly. One priority category will be opened at a time to clear the waiting list for that priority category before opening the next priority category.
2. If OVR is unable to serve everyone in a specific category, customers will be taken off the list by month of application starting with the customers who have been waiting the longest to receive services.
3. A monthly list will be generated by CWDS. Each quarter, based on financial availability, OVR will determine how many customers will be taken off the waiting list for the recently opened priority category.
4. Notice will be provided to district offices that they can begin developing plans for customers in a certain range of dates, based on the application date.
5. The District Administrator will ensure customers are assigned to counselors.
6. Counselors will complete an IPE within 90 days from the date the client was taken off the waiting list.

**C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS**

OVR's outcome and service goals are projected as follows for PY2021-2024:

1. For the Most Significant Disability category, the number eligible is expected to be 17,000, while the number served will be 46,000. The number rehabilitated will be 7,000 (from DLI Performance Plan), of which 100% will be rehabilitated into the competitive labor market.
2. For the Significant Disability category, the number accepted is expected to be 300 Significant Disability continue on the waiting list as OVR continues to conduct outreach and accept applications from individuals who would meet category II of the OOS.
3. For the Non-Significant Disability category, the number accepted is expected to be 9 Non-Significant Disability continue on a waiting list as OVR continues to conduct

outreach and accept applications from individuals who would meet category III of the OOS.

Using both current and historical data, OVR projects that 300 individuals categorized as Significant Disability and 9 individuals categorized as Non-Significant Disability will be on the OOS wait list throughout PY 2024. OVR will continue to conduct outreach and accept applications from individuals who meet the functional limitation criteria of the Significant Disability and Non-Significant Disability categories.

**D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND**

The time frame in which goals are to be achieved is approximately 30 months for the Most Significant Disability priority of service category.

**E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

In keeping with federal mandates, it is the policy of OVR to operate on an OOS when the agency is unable to provide services to all eligible individuals in the same state who apply for services. The OOS in Pennsylvania gives priority first to individuals categorized as Most Significant Disability; secondly, to individuals categorized as Significant Disability; and third to individuals categorized as Non-Significant Disability. All new applicants for services must be notified about the OOS. With all categories closed, it would be expected that Most Significant Disability would be included in these Priority Category breakout on projections listed here for the remaining period of PY 2021.

The determination of the level of significance is made by the VRC based upon a review of data developed to make the eligibility determination, and to the extent necessary, an assessment of additional data.

Significance of disability is defined based upon the presence of functional capacities and the requirement of multiple VR services, defined as two or more services that are expected to last 6 months from the date of the IPE or be needed on an ongoing basis to reduce an impediment to employment.

With all categories closed, a letter is sent to the individuals who will be placed on a waiting list for services indicating that they have been determined Most Significant Disability, Significant Disability or Non-Significant Disability. VRCs provide information and referral services regarding the most suitable services to assist the individual on the waiting list and this is documented within a case progress note or the waiting list letter sent to the individual.

OVR Executive Leadership team will evaluate the agency's available resources on a quarterly basis to serve all eligible individuals with disabilities. OVR will determine when to open each category based upon financial availability. One priority category will be opened at a time to clear the waiting list for that priority category before opening the next priority category. If OVR is unable to serve everyone in a specific category, customers will be taken off the list by month of application, starting with the customers who have been waiting the longest to receive services. If resources are available, the OVR District Offices will be informed that they can move individuals from waiting into an active status with OVR. A monthly list will be generated by



CWDS. Each quarter, based on financial availability, OVR will determine how many customers will be taken off the deferred list for the recently opened priority category.

**2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT**

Any applicant who has been determined eligible due to their disability, is in immediate risk of losing the job due to the disability, and is determined to be in a category not currently being served, may only receive the services or goods needed to maintain the job.

1. The job must be in a competitive integrated setting. If services are needed for other purposes, they may not be delivered, and the applicant must wait until their name is removed from a waiting list category and placed into active service. This means that if the individual needs services that are not directly tied to maintaining current employment, the individual's ability to receive those services from the VR program depends on the individual's placement on the waiting list.
2. Immediate need means that the individual would almost certainly lose their current job if not provided specific services or equipment in the very near future that would enable them to retain that employment.
3. Immediate risk of losing the job due to the disability does not include economic conditions and non-disability related factors.

**N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS**

**1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

OVR will utilize a minimum of 50% of its title VI fund award towards SE services for youth with disabilities for the 2022-2023 program year.

**2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:**

**A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND**

A determination of the need for extended services for youth, up to age 25 with a disability, begins during the initial assessment phase of a case. At that time, the rehabilitation team comprised of the youth, the youth's family, OVR staff, Case Manager/Supports Coordinator (if applicable), LEA staff and others, determine possible long-term support needs and resources. As the case progresses, and the youth obtains employment, the individual's stability on the job informs the determination of the need for extended services and the timing of provision. Those who reach 80% or better independence on the job are considered job stable, and the case is followed for 90 days to ensure the expected progression to full independence with natural supports in place. For those at 80% or lower independence on the job after intensive job supports have been provided, there is an expectation of need for continued coaching and extended support services. If no other source of funding is available for the individual, OVR can provide extended services to youth using Federal VR dollars until the end of the 48<sup>th</sup> month the customer has been receiving supported employment services on the job. For cases with alternative funding, OVR must continue to follow-along for a minimum of 90 days after the case transitions to extended services prior to determining a successful closure outcome. For those individual's with ODP funding, OVR entered into a joint bulletin that dictates when the case can move to ODP-funded extended services and documentation requirements.

**B. HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.**

OVR will seek opportunities to leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expand SE opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities. This will be done by exploring innovative partnerships and enhancing service coordination with agencies such as ODP, OMHSAS, OLTL and BJJS, as well as LEAs.

OVR has entered into a MOU with BJJS, in collaboration with PACTT affiliates, that leverages state and federal funding. These funds are targeted to provide a wide range of services such as the creation of summer programming, increased pre-employment transition services, and paid work experiences to promote career pathways in the underserved population of students/youth with the most significant disabilities who are involved with the juvenile justice system.

Funding for extended services is often available for customers eligible for Medical Assistance waiver programs administered through ODP and OLTL. Procedures are now in place for a youth's rehabilitation team consisting of the youth, the youth's family, OVR staff, Case Manager/Supports Coordinator (if applicable), LEA staff and others, to identify these resources at an early point in an OVR case. A joint bulletin between OVR and ODP now details when and how a case moves from OVR to ODP funding, including cases for youth with disabilities.

OVR has initiated an Employer Service Premium (ESP) for providers as an incentive to work with unserved/underserved populations including transition-age youth. Two of the 13 qualifiers for the ESP are the Age Premium Qualifier, which applies to OVR customers under the age of 25, and the Transition Premium Qualifier for customers who become employed within two years of graduation from secondary education.

**O. STATE'S STRATEGIES**

**1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Goal #1: Increase Competitive Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities.**

In June 2018, Pennsylvania adopted the Employment First Act, Act 2018-36, 62 P.S. § 3401 *et seq.*, to ensure that individuals with a disability be given the opportunity to achieve economic independence through jobs that pay competitive wages in community integrated settings. The statute also created the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities and the Employment First Oversight Commission. The Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities will review existing regulations and policies to recommend changes to laws, regulations, policies, and procedures that ensure implementation of Employment First. OVR has a key role in this initiative and, through the sub-goals below, will participate fully to increase employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

1. Expand the availability of apprenticeships, internships and OJT for individuals with disabilities.

In order to expand the availability of these services OVR must continue to strengthen and increase business partnerships. OVR will work to serve businesses through a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) approach, modeled after the CSAVR use of a National Points of Contact network. OVR staff within BSOD and local District Offices will continue to outreach to employers to increase opportunities for apprenticeships, internships, and OJTs for individuals with disabilities. Identified OVR staff will also participate in regional planning processes in partnership with local workforce development boards. Within each of Pennsylvania's workforce development areas, data analysis will be conducted to identify employment sectors that are most likely to account for job growth and expansion in the next five years.

OVR, and HGAC, will measure success of this goal through by comparing data from the current program year related to:

- Increasing the number of apprenticeship awareness events/trainings in the next program year.
- Increasing the number of new apprenticeship developments facilitated by OVR/HGAC staff in the next program year.
- An increase in the number of internships acquired by OVR/HGAC participants in the next program year.
- An increase in the number of OJTs provided to OVR/HGAC participants in the next program year.

OVR's BSOD will be reviewing and establishing standard operating procedures (SOP) to ensure statewide consistency of OJTs, internships, large-scale hiring/referral efforts, and other related initiatives. SOP will also ensure that businesses engaging with OVR receive consistent and appropriate response to hiring needs. Along with the development of SOP BSOD will conduct regional and statewide trainings to support the field. One example of how a successful SOP for a large-scale hiring/referral effort increased OJT availability is through the recent InspiriTec hiring initiative in 2021 for its Customer Service Representative for Unemployment Compensation position. BSOD consulted with the business, crafted an SOP, and trained and mobilized SPOCs for all local offices—ultimately supporting the referral of over 600 customers with over 300 customers being hired *with* OJTs.

Identified OVR staff have been and will continue to partner with the Pennsylvania Apprenticeship & Training Office (ATO), Keystone Development Partnership (KDP), and others to learn how to cultivate, develop, and support apprenticeship opportunities. One example of this method is through the Registered Apprenticeship Navigator course provided through KDP where three BSOD specialists are physically participating in an apprenticeship geared towards the development of registered apprenticeships. Upon the potential success of this program OVR will assess potential continued enrollment of field staff in future cohorts.

Over the next two years, OVR intends to work collaboratively with DLI's ATO Office. An agreement between OVR and This collaboration will include activities and services related to promoting opportunities, training OVR staff on how to facilitate customer access to pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships and forming connections with registered apprenticeship sponsors.

In addition, HGAC is consulting with the ATO and OVR BSOD to develop a pre-apprenticeship training program. A short-term, pre-apprenticeship training program will be designed to provide the necessary preparatory safety skills and certifications for individuals who are interested in entering registered apprenticeships. HGAC will provide the pre-apprenticeship training on site and registered employers will provide the technical training. Specific preparatory skills and certifications will be determined by participating employers, based on their industry's respective needs for skilled workers. OVR intends to explore an agreement

between the Hiram G. Andrews Center and the Mon Valley Initiative to use matching VR grant funds to create pre-apprenticeship pathways to traditional apprenticeship in trades as well as non-traditional apprenticeships (e.g. IT, healthcare/Medical, Manufacturing, Customer Service and Hospitality, Conservation, Renewable Energy & Natural Resources, Service Industries, Culinary and Food Service).

HGAC also offers internship/externship opportunities. HGAC will also measure success of this goal based on an annual evaluation of the number of apprenticeships, internships, OJT's, and paid work experiences developed for individuals with disabilities.

2. Partner with the BWPO, local Workforce Development Boards (WDB), and individual CareerLink administration bodies to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility of the PA CareerLink centers for equal access for individuals with disabilities.

OVR District Administrators and some Assistant District Administrators in OVR's 21 District Offices participate in their local Workforce Development Board meetings regularly to further collaboration of efforts with the goal to lead to increased employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

To promote programmatic accessibility, the BSOD has developed a comprehensive disability awareness and etiquette training that is delivered across the commonwealth to interested PA CareerLink partners and businesses. OVR has also made available to all Commonwealth employees an "Introduction to OVR" training to inform staff about the services OVR can offer to individuals with disabilities. OVR staff has received Leadership Training on the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act to include strategies and modules for training businesses and customers on the Act.

To promote physical accessibility within the CareerLink sites across the commonwealth, trained OVR business services staff offer and conduct ADA accessibility assessments and offer recommendations based on the findings to the local WDB's and the CareerLink administration. OVR will also remain available to assist with providing guidance to CareerLinks undergoing a move or renovation.

The goal will be achieved when all PA CareerLink sites have received ADA accessibility evaluations by OVR and measurement of success will be evaluated each PY by reviewing the percentage of PA CareerLink sites with completed evaluations.

3. Increase SE and Customized Employment outcomes; evaluate and monitor OVR's SE policy implementation.

OVR is in the process of revising its SE policy and it is expected to be near completion in the 2022/2023 program year. The goals of this policy revision include:

- Increasing the percentage of successful outcomes for OVR SE participants.
- Increasing the number of approved vendors to deliver SE services.
- Reducing the number of billing challenges through simplification and increased flexibility of the service model.
- Identifying monitoring guidelines for assessing the quality of SE services.

## **Goal #2: Improve Transition Services for Students with Disabilities.**

OVR staff will remain at the forefront working with PDE personnel to increase pre-employment transition service opportunities for students with disabilities, as well as increasing opportunities for the development of workplace skills and community integrated work experiences.

1. Update the Pre-Employment Transition Services program, including the case management system, so that it provides services to students with disabilities in an efficient, documented, and cost-effective manner that aligns with federal regulations.
2. Develop internal controls that ensure services are provided to students based on an assessment of need.
3. Develop and utilize a continuum of services based on evidence-based practices to demonstrate student progress.
4. Develop monitoring and program evaluation procedures to identify best practices that can be replicated throughout the state.
5. Add services to increase opportunities for students to gain workplace skills and community integrated work experiences.
6. Enhance collaborative relationships with DHS, PDE and higher education institutions by:
  - a. ensuring that each secondary school in Pennsylvania has a point of contact;
  - b. participating in the Statewide Leadership Team;
  - c. collaborating in the development of the Pennsylvania Community on Transition Conference each year; and
  - d. participating in cross-training and attending partner conferences.

Success of this goal will be determined by an increase in the number of pre-employment opportunities available for students with disabilities as well as an increase in the number of opportunities for development of workplace skills and community integrated work experiences for each PY.

## **Goal #3: Increase Community Education and Outreach.**

1. Work with PaRC to identify and incorporate best practices and strategies to increase Customer Satisfaction survey response data.

The customer satisfaction survey information is an important way for OVR to understand the needs of the community and to outreach to customers. OVR will continue to work closely with PaRC on developing ideas and plans to increase customer satisfaction. OVR provides PaRC with a monthly summary of the results from the customer satisfaction surveys. In addition, OVR staff participate in PaRC Customer Satisfaction Committee conference calls on a quarterly basis to discuss the results of these summaries. There have been some technical changes made in CWDS in an attempt to increase customer participation in this process, with minimal improvement. OVR is dedicated to working with PaRC to find additional creative ways to improve customer

participation in the survey process. Success of these efforts will be determined by an increase in response rate of customers completing the surveys on an annual basis.

2. Continue to develop stronger awareness among OVR staff of the cultural and linguistic differences and needs of unserved/underserved individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minorities.

During 2018-2019, OVR conducted research on diversity and inclusion needs of unserved and underserved populations through a contract with the Pennsylvania State University Research Team. The research included three different phases: focus groups with representation from all 21 OVR District Offices; staff surveys; and key informant interviews of individuals who have a special knowledge or perspective on OVR and performance as it relates to diversity and inclusion. The outcome of this research, and associated benchmarks, will be used to guide OVR in the development of in-service training for staff, as well as future programmatic adaptations to stretch OVR's reach to those identified as unserved or underserved in Pennsylvania. OVR is in the process to create a diversity and inclusion task force to develop a plan for continual implementation and monitoring of diversity and inclusion integration across the commonwealth. OVR has also developed a variety of focus groups to explore issues related to diversity, equality, and inclusion for marginalized groups of individuals within its employment. OVR's goals during this next two-year plan will be to complete staff training in diversity and inclusion, and to develop a task force for continued implementation of a diversity and inclusion focus. Measurement of success will be evaluated based on OVR's ability to complete staff training in DEI and to complete development of a task force before June 2024.

3. Promote accessibility and technology based upon universal design principles.

An important part of the rehabilitation process is evaluating the accessibility and technology needs of OVR customers. This takes place during the initial intake interview, continues throughout the life of the case, and is most important at the time when the individualized plan for employment is developed. Each customer has individualized needs and although not everyone will require assistive technology, this is an important practice. OVR has an AT Specialist onboard to assist staff with maximizing the use of AT and provide information about how AT can assist OVR customers to achieve their educational and employment goals. This specialist also supports OVR staff who have accessibility needs on-the-job when the organization is transitioning to new software or hardware devices.

OVR staff also supports community outreach by issuing grants for ATLL, the assistive technology lending library facilitated through the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, as well as to the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) which offers individuals with disabilities alternative financing to purchase assistive technology, and home and vehicle modifications. These programs offer important services to the disability community that might otherwise go unmet in terms of accessibility and assistive technology.

Another way that OVR engages in community outreach and supporting universal design principles is by offering to conduct ADA accessibility assessments at CareerLink locations. This service is offered through the BSOD team upon request.

In addition, OVR collaborates with the DLI's BWPO via PA CareerLink offices to better assist veterans who have disabilities in obtaining assistive technology (AT) to remove barriers in locating and maintaining employment. OVR staff attends Pennsylvania Cares meetings to learn about AT and training programs offered by various community and state agencies and higher education institutions. OVR staff then disseminate this information statewide to OVR Veteran Coordinators and Veteran Counselors who provide AT equipment and training to OVR customers who are veterans with disabilities.

Finally, the OVR Training Division is also committed to accessibility by ensuring that all training materials for OVR staff or external participants are available in accessible format before being released. In addition, the OVR Training Director schedules a Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) service for each staff webinar or video conference training. CART service is also provided for any OVR scheduled public meeting, in addition to sign language interpreter services being available at every OVR district office.

Progress will be evaluated through a monthly review of customer and employee satisfaction surrounding accessibility and technology resources offered to them. OVR customers are randomly sent customer satisfaction surveys to be completed at the end of the VR process while OVR employees have the opportunity to provide feedback on training survey forms. Success will be considered achieved if the positive comments/reactions outweigh the negative.

#### **Goal #4: Initiate and Complete Capital Improvement Projects at HGAC.**

In order to offer state-of-the-art educational training and rehabilitative services, the Hiram G. Andrews Center must continue to repair, replace, enhance and expand services, technologies and physical plant offerings to attract and retain students and offer the highest quality education and rehabilitation services.

There are specific projects the Hiram G. Andrews Center anticipates initiating and completing within the scope of this plan. The specific projects planned are an upgrade to the existing building automation system, upgrade and replacement of security cameras throughout campus, upgrade to existing, end-of-life phone system, remodel and upgrade to all existing public restrooms within the Hiram G. Andrews Center, repairs to the facility roof, replacement of end-of-life air handlers and cooling towers, repair to a failing ADA ramp/egress which is pulling away from the facility, window replacement within the facility kitchen and Dining Hall, repair to existing sidewalks to include repair and addition of curb-cuts and an upgrade to the end-of-life wi-fi access points, with an upgrade to the staff network.

Plans related to growth of the Hiram G. Andrews Center, and the expansion to serve more customers in existing programs, and the establishment of short-term, high impact programming makes the capital improvements necessary to ensure viability and continued growth and impact into the future.

The Hiram G. Andrews Center Executive Team annually establishes projects that are required to be completed within the physical plant. All recommended projects are vetted through the OVR Executive Team before any initiation. Prior approval will be sought when appropriate and necessary.

HGAC will be phasing the renovation of our seven dormitories over multiple years, renovating half-dormitories at a time to modernize and revamp our student living areas. This renovation is long overdue, with original fixtures, desks and cabinets still being used by current students.”

Progress on these goals will be measured by the work completed during each phase of the renovation process and the goals will be considered successfully achieved when each renovation is complete.

## 2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS

In accordance with OVR’s policies, OVR purchases AT devices and services to support its customers in their vocational goals. OVR also provides information and referral services regarding other resources when the agency is unable to provide funding for AT devices and services. OVR’s Statewide AT Coordinator regularly distributes information electronically to OVR’s District Offices regarding non-VR funded AT services, programs, and resources.

The VR customer will be provided AT services and devices throughout the rehabilitation process. An assessment will always precede the issuance and use of any AT device or service to ensure provision of such items is appropriate and necessary to meet the vocational needs of the individual.

OVR works with vendors who are Rehabilitation Engineers and AT Specialists on a "fee-for-service" basis throughout the commonwealth. Most providers, including staff from HGAC’s Center for Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology, can travel to the OVR customer’s home and/or worksite to provide AT evaluation and training services.

OVR also has specific AT policies including a Home Modification Policy, Vehicle Modification Policy and the Farming and Agriculture Rehabilitation Management policy. These policies provide a wide range of AT evaluation and services detailed to meet the needs of OVR customers in removing environmental barriers to employment.

The Center for Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology at the HGAC in Johnstown, Pennsylvania is an available AT resource to OVR customers throughout the commonwealth. Referrals to this program are made as a service provided through the Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP) process. In particular, CART services may be of assistance for customers that are current high school seniors preparing for college, but is available to any individual with a disability. Highly trained professionals evaluate and support people in the following areas of assistive technology: positioning and mobility; computer access; augmentative communication; environmental controls; driver evaluation; vehicle modification; devices for activities of daily living; devices for visual and/or auditory impairment; and home and work modifications. The Learning Technology Program assesses student’s needs in the classroom and trains them in the use of assistive technology, if necessary.

OVR collaborates with Pennsylvania’s Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT) at the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University to participate in training, to support the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Lending Library, and to develop AT resources for Pennsylvanians with disabilities. PIAT’s Lending Library provides the opportunity for any Pennsylvanian to borrow



and assess the usefulness of an AT device prior to purchase. Devices may also be borrowed as a temporary accommodation (for employment, post—secondary education, or similar purposes). The centralized inventory for this program is located on the HGAC campus; devices are shipped to/from borrowers at no cost from this location as part of the ATLL program. The regional subcontractors of PIAT facilitate the selection, borrowing, and use of these devices across the state.

OVR customers are also informed about low interest loans that are available through the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation for customers who have a disability or any older or state resident who has need for AT.

OVR also collaborates with BWPO via the PA CareerLink sites to better assist veterans who have disabilities obtain AT to remove barriers in locating and maintaining employment. The Statewide Veterans Coordinator attends Pennsylvania Cares meetings monthly to learn about assistive technology/training programs offered by various community and state agencies and higher education institutions. This information is transmitted statewide to OVR Veteran Coordinators and Veteran Counselors in each field office who provide AT equipment and training to OVR customers who are veterans with disabilities.

OVR has additionally collaborated with Penn State's AgrAbility Program and the Department of Agriculture in developing a policy to address the rehabilitation needs of farmers/ranchers with disabilities. This policy is known as Farming and Agriculture Rehabilitation Management which is designed to assist farmers with disabilities. VRCs, with technical assistance and guidance from Pennsylvania's AgrAbility Program, are able to assess the rehabilitation needs of farmers/ranchers with disabilities to provide the specialized rehabilitative and assistive technologies they may need to maintain their employment.

Finally, OVR will explore an agreement with the Office of Administration's Human Resources Office for the development of a Career Transition Professional (CTP). The CTP may serve as the Commonwealth of PA Employer Single Point of Contact (SPOC) in the recruitment, retention, and onboarding of all individuals with disabilities that meet the employer identified requirements for employment.

### **3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM**

OVR has referenced information found in the 2016-2018 CSNA recommendations and strategies to develop stronger awareness among OVR staff of the cultural and linguistic differences and needs for individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minorities within their community. OVR strives to provide employees and customers with materials, resources, and services in languages other than English. Depending on the cultural and ethnic composition of a community, some OVR offices employ bi-lingual vocational counselors to increase outreach to unserved or underserved populations. This may include arrangements by an OVR counselor to use a liaison site to work in the community as a means to offer greater access to services. District Office staff also regularly look for opportunities in their community to promote OVR services through participation in "Back to School" nights, job fairs, and community events.

#### 4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES)

OVR will collaborate with LEAs to assist youth in the attainment of competitive, integrated employment by increasing paid work experience opportunities and other career exposure experiences, such as job shadowing, mentoring, and employer mock interviews, in addition to SE services.

OVR has experienced significant growth and interest in customer participation in its Summer Academy programs. What started as an extended “freshman orientation” to college campus life for students with disabilities has evolved into numerous highly specialized, short-term programs for students and youth. The popularity of these programs has led OVR to the point where these programs need to be restructured, to allow specialized service vendors to share with OVR and its customers their specialized programs and curricula to meet OVR customer individual needs in the most community integrated and least restrictive settings as possible.

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, OVR implemented a workflow to ensure the delivery of pre-employment transition services to schools without supplanting services already occurring in the classroom. OVR staff meet with school districts to assess their resources and the needs of their students. Once it is determined what services are needed by the school, OVR will first work with their district office staff to provide those pre-employment transition services. If we do not have the staff available, OVR will seek a provider to complete the service.

#### 5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

OVR has also been working to improve CRPs through the monitoring of contracts and grants. The monitoring of VR programs awarded through I&E contracts and/or AMs or provider agreements are routinely monitored by OVR using a standardized process and standardized tool. This process is outlined in the VR Services Manual. Both the vendor, as well as the local District Office, are afforded the opportunity to provide input regarding issues that have an impact on projected customer outcomes. This monitoring information is used by OVR to establish, develop, improve, and realign community vocational rehabilitation services, and has been used to help with problem situations. This input is also of fundamental importance when OVR reviews and considers programmatic existing service contract renewals, amendments, and new service bids especially at the time of service and/or customer case review.

In addition, an SE Provider Agreement will continue to streamline the approval and onboarding of new SE (including Customized Employment) providers. Regular technical assistance and training calls, an SE provider email list, and SE resource accounts for technical and policy questions have been established and will be utilized for communication with and to support community rehabilitation programs. In recognition of the challenges identified by CRPs related to the current SE policy (implemented in 2018), OVR will continue the process of revising the SE policy to mitigate complex system rules, inflexibility of service progression/timelines, and period of performance difficulties surrounding the processing of SE service authorizations. Upon the adoption and implementation of a revised policy, efforts will then be made to develop a standard monitoring tool and procedure with a timeline so that all of OVR’s SE providers can benefit from direct feedback and technical support.

Starting in 2017, OVR, in collaboration with ODP, investigated and put into place the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP™) ACRE, a credentialing process that recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a sufficient level of knowledge and skill to provide integrated employment services to a variety of populations. Specifically, ACRE certification endorses competency-based training in 2 areas:

1. Employment Services (basic and professional levels); and
2. Employment Services with an Emphasis on Customized Employment (basic and professional levels).

OVR has been engaging CRPs for benefit counseling by using a Benefits Counseling Provider Agreement to set rates and services, which allows OVR staff to authorize CRPs to provide this service directly to customers. Benefits counseling services are provided by CRPs across Pennsylvania and are considered an integral component in the development of employment goals. Individuals with disabilities seeking services through Pennsylvania OVR who receive Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance require skilled personnel to assist in the decision-making process. Certified benefits planners are sought to assist customers in identifying the potential impact of employment in the pursuit of independence. Having this type of support and individualized information can help individuals pursue their career goals with a better understanding and less worry about their benefits. These certified benefits planners are employed by CRPs. Information was disseminated to OVR field staff and CRPs through webinar trainings, in an effort to establish these services in more CRPs across Pennsylvania. Currently, three community rehabilitation programs have been approved and one community rehabilitation program is awaiting approval. Field staff are additionally encouraged to enroll new CRPs and to encourage customer engagement in the process.

#### 6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

OVR has implemented a variety of measures to assist with the employment rate, measurable skills gains, and credential attainment of people with disabilities as indicated in Section 116 of WIOA.

1. OVR has implemented a comprehensive revision of its SE and Customized Employment programs in 2018 which offers additional assistance, services, and short and long term follow up services to ensure that customers are placed appropriately and are able to maintain their employment. Due to the identified challenges listed earlier in this plan OVR will continue to revise the policy through the use of an SE Workgroup and regular CRP engagement.
2. OVR has required that SE and Customized Employment vendors have minimum standard credentials to provide these services to ensure better quality outcomes for our customers.
3. OVR has developed a comprehensive measurable skills gain training and documentation process within CWDS.
4. OVR routinely invests significant resources in training activities across the commonwealth to ensure that customers are able to become employed in their chosen career field.

5. OVR has partnered with the Office of Administration in offering a Commonwealth Internship program for our students in the Harrisburg area to work in a variety of Commonwealth agencies related to their degree.
6. OVR has partnered with CIL partners to offer internship opportunities at a variety of CIL locations across the state.
7. OVR has partnered with a variety of institutions of higher learning to offer supported education programs for customers on the autism spectrum to ensure that they are able to successfully complete their college degrees and obtain community integrated employment post-graduation.
8. OVR continues to offer several summer activities that allow our customers to utilize AT and be better prepared for college life and expectations which enables them to obtain credentials and lead to community integrated employment post-graduation.
9. OVR is partnering with ODP to share data to better track shared services and utilize long term supports to ensure mutual customers that become employed have the supports necessary to stay employed long term.
10. OVR has also introduced a variety of customer satisfaction surveys related to transition, SE, status 26 and status 28 closures to learn from our customers what services or supports were most impactful.

OVR has also implemented a comprehensive business services approach to serving the business community.

1. OVR's statewide business service team serves as a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for staff and businesses. In this role as a SPOC, business service staff offer training and technical assistance on business engagement, ADA consultation, placement trends, and activities. A SPOC also interfaces with business and industry to provide support and develop programs and partnership locations.
2. OVR will continue to implement local business SPOCs for businesses for ADA and reasonable accommodation consultations, the placement of customers, etc.
3. OVR will continue to create and foster multiple partnerships with businesses that lead to placements and long-term opportunities for training and measurable skill development, or credential attainment for OVR customers.
4. OVR will develop standard operating procedures related to key business service offerings (i.e. OJTs, large-scale hiring efforts, internships, etc.) along with staff training and support to improve consistency and quality of services to customers and businesses.
5. OVR is working on an update to CWDS to track business engagement activities referred to as "indicator" #6 in WIOA Title I-IV. These business engagement activities measure common program effectiveness in serving employers and are currently being developed by DLI Workforce System partners that include: OVR, PA CareerLink sites, the Statewide Workforce Development Board, CWIA, and Title II Adult Education Programs.

#### 7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

WIOA has mandated that six federally funded programs work together to improve alignment, coordination, cooperation and collaboration in services to businesses. Programs included in this alignment include: Title I Workforce programs for Youth, Adults and Dislocated Workers; Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 Employment

Services (American Job Centers known in Pennsylvania as PA CareerLink), and Title IV, the public VR program as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, *as amended*. This has led to a greater emphasis on student/youth career pathways, competitive integrated employment for persons with disabilities, and increased business engagement.

OVR will partner with PA CareerLink staff, Pennsylvania economic development partners, community rehabilitation providers (CRPs), DHS ODP, OMHSAS, OLTL and other DLI BWPO multi-employer workforce partnerships in an effort to increase employment opportunities for OVR customers. When an employer works with the PA CareerLink or a CRP for example, it is because they have a need for qualified talent. By coordinating with these agencies the available talent for referral to businesses expand with the addition of potential OVR customers, meeting the needs of both the job seekers and the employers.

OVR BSOD staff and District Office business services teams will review regional workforce trends to focus on in-demand employment sectors expected to grow in the next five years to aid in the following:

1. Provide a high level of business engagement with targeted employers to increase awareness of OVR services and to develop OJTs, work-based learning experiences, etc.
2. Share Labor Market Information (LMI) published monthly from DLI's CWIA between business services staff and local district office VRC's to promote career-based IPEs likely to lead to successful employment and skill training to prepare for expansion or 'super' sector jobs in each region of Pennsylvania.

In response to an organization's demand side workforce talent needs, OVR can offer a recruitment process to bring qualified pre-screened individuals with a disability into their organization. OVR will work with each business to target career ladders and pathways for quality competitive integrated employment in career pathways matched to a VR customer's financial needs, unique aspirations, capacities and the talent succession plans of an employer. OVR will simplify the process by using a SPOC approach modeled after CSAVR's use of a national Points of Contact network when a business with multi-county or state operations seek VR talent across several states and Pennsylvania Workforce regions.

BSOD specialists or combined bureau staff will provide no-cost consultation to employers on disability etiquette, accessibility, accommodation needs and referral assistance to help retain an employer's workforce following an injury or the onset of a disability upon request. Some OVR business service staff are trained in the mid-Atlantic TransCen ADA Leadership models from Cornell University, on the use of the Misericordia University Comprehensive Accessibility Kit, and the Americans with Disability Act Architectural Guidelines standards, and can provide non-legal, best practice disability etiquette training and on-site accessibility compliance reviews to employers and State agencies, upon request.

#### 8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

##### A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The 2015-2018 CSNA Report, jointly conducted by the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, along with OVR, and PaRC, was used to develop the goals and priorities for this plan, along with the strategies that will contribute to the achievement of the goals for the 2020-2024 Pennsylvania WIOA Combined State Plan. A steering committee, including seven OVR

employees and nine members of PaRC, met to discuss the requirements of the CSNA, and to develop the Statement of Work to guide the focus of the CSNA. An essential factor of this CSNA plan was to encompass the overall rehabilitation needs of people with disabilities throughout Pennsylvania, including those individuals served by other parts of the statewide workforce investment system. The goals and strategies described above align with goals and strategies recommended from the CSNA.

The continued focus on improving transition services for students with disabilities in this plan is consistent with a goal recommended from the CSNA, that OVR work to develop more holistic and equitable relationships and communication with school districts across the commonwealth. OVR transition staff, including Early Reach Coordinators will continue to participate in activities in local school districts, work with students, and attend transition planning meetings.

OVR's goal to invest in a Diversity and Inclusion project is also supported in recommendations from the CSNA. OVR will use the research from the recently completed Diversity and Inclusion project with Penn State University to develop training for OVR staff beginning in 2020 directed toward: defining the concept of diversity and inclusion; understanding barriers for underrepresented/underserved populations; an outline of the value and importance of diversity and inclusion; providing substantial resources and strategies for our staff in providing services to the communities we serve. In addition, to develop stronger awareness among OVR staff of the cultural and linguistic differences and needs for individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minorities, OVR will increase training in culturally competent strategies for serving these communities. OVR will continue to strive to provide more staff, materials, resources and services in languages other than English that may be the dominate languages of some individuals with disabilities from cultural and ethnic minority communities as well as refugee communities.

Customer Satisfaction continues to be an important topic from the CSNA and as described above in a renewed goal to continue work with PaRC to evaluate and improve on customer satisfaction surveys. OVR, in coordination with PaRC, will continue to evaluate ways the customer satisfaction surveys can be used to identify trends and patterns for service provision, will share this information with PaRC during customer satisfaction committee calls, and will work together to make improvements to the surveys and improve customer response rates.

Finally, the strategies planned through OVR's Business Services and HGAC to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities aligns with goals and priorities in the CSNA and the Employment First Act, Act 2018-36. OVR's BSOD will continue to develop innovative partnerships with eligible educational and workforce providers beyond what is already established.

#### **B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND**

OVR has engaged in the provision of innovative and expansion activities through distinct I & E projects designed to address the pre-employment and transition needs of students with the most significant disabilities. Expiring I & E projects have demonstrated the ability to achieve established goals and improve employment opportunities for students engaged in each program. Current I&Es are scheduled to expire September 30, 2021 and September 30, 2022. These programs are engaging with local district offices to continue services using provider agreements allowing for increased student engagement.

I & E project engagement has increased student engagement in the workforce through exploration of post-secondary opportunities, participation in work readiness services and supports, while engaging in employment opportunities in the community.

New I & E projects are being developed through the MOU with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to increase engagement of students with the most significant disabilities. The MOU is being amended to include the support of a Transition Employment & Agency Mentor – Navigators (Team Navigator) within each Intermediate Unit (IU). OVR, subject to availability of funds, will jointly provide funding over four (4) years to be used exclusively for the operation and administration of technical assistance.

#### C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

Transportation rose as the most significant barrier to service provision and employment in the CSNA for both OVR customers and OVR staff. Many OVR customers live in rural counties with limited transportation options and these rural counties present similar difficulty for OVR staff who may have to travel two to three hours to visit a customer. OVR collaborates with employers to adjust work schedules and local transportation authorities to adjust and/or expand service routes that better enable OVR customers to get to work. OVR staff are encouraged to schedule multiple customer visits when traveling to rural counties.

A second closely related barrier is the availability and use of technology in rural areas. Not all OVR customer base have computers or use of internet service. In addition, some customers are reluctant to use texting or e-mail to communicate with OVR. Some VR staff reported that many rural customers still rely on paper mail as their primary form of communication. This is problematic in rural areas where the postal system has stopped daily delivery of mail. Additional staff training on creative forms of communication and more clearly defined expectations in OVR policies related to communication is being considered.

OVR will explore an agreement with the Commonwealth's Office of Administration to develop accessibility testing through use of Information Technology Accommodation Personnel throughout all OVR combined District Offices. Accessibility testing verifies that digital content and services are usable by people with disabilities. Information Technology Accommodation Personnel will also coach, mentor, and train others who are learning to do accessibility testing.

A third barrier identified is related to counselor caseload size. While the average caseload size within OVR is 120 customers, some counselors have caseloads of 200 to 250 customers. With the closing of the OOS, we are recognizing the challenges staff are facing with increasingly complex case-management. Staff training is being planned to begin to address some of these challenges and offer improved case-management strategies.

A final barrier identified in the CSNA is related to inconsistent practice among OVR District Offices in the implementation of service provision to customers. Future staff training is again an avenue to improve the delivery of equitable and consistent services throughout Pennsylvania.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

**VR Goal 1: Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities.**

There are 3 parts to Goal 1:

1.

a.

i.

1. Expand the availability of apprenticeships, internships, and OJTs for individuals with disabilities.

1.

a. **Apprenticeship achievement:**

- i. During PY 2020 three BSOD Specialists began a 1-year Registered Apprenticeship Navigator course provided through KDP where they are physically participating in an apprenticeship geared towards the development of registered apprenticeships. The knowledge gathered from this course will be used to assist OVR in employing new strategies to developing future apprenticeship opportunities.
- ii. During PY 2020 OVR continued to partner with DLI's Apprenticeship & Training Office to increase apprenticeship opportunities however due to staffing challenges and the remaining effects of COVID-19 mitigation results of increased apprenticeships have yet to be assessed.
- iii. OVR's Business Services and Outreach Division staff continued to support the Commonwealth Technical Institute/HGAC to explore eligibility of current certification programs and certificate skill trainings to become registered Apprenticeships or Pre-Apprenticeships.

b. **Internship achievement:** In PY 2020, 13 OVR customers participated in OJT-backed internship experiences. Of those, 5 were identified as youth and 6 identified as students.

c. **On-the-Job Training achievement:** In program year 2020, approximately 1,721 customers participated in OJT wage reimbursement employment opportunities that resulted in either:

- i. 92 individuals completed an OJT as a work experience and job reference. This has included temporary, summer, and seasonal time-limited employment in retail establishments, amusement parks, health care, municipal maintenance, customer service, and clerical positions.
- ii. 75 individuals completed an OJT in support of a permanent job.



- iii. InspiriTec CSR for UC Initiative: OVR partnered with InspiriTec, an AbilityOne contractor, to refer at least 440 customers for a temporary job as Customer Service Representatives for PA Unemployment Compensation. As of 6/30/2021, OVR staff:

- 1.
  - a. Referred 670 customers for the position where approximately 455 successfully applied
  - b. Supported the hiring of 308 customers (most of which had OJTs)

The numbers above do not reflect actual paid services as the OJT's spanned across PY 2020 and PY 2021

1.

a. **Strategies related to the achievement of part 1 of Goal 1:**

i.

- 1. Marketing OJT value to businesses and for those not interested in wage reimbursement, OVR offered other services such as supported employment, customized employment, ADA consultation, etc.
- 2. Not applying Financial Needs Test (FNT) to the provision of OJT affords all customers the benefit of OJT wage reimbursement services to an employer regardless of their financial status.
- 3. Marketing the value of internships to both employers and customers through statewide, regional, and local means using the SPOC model and business service connections.
- 4. Beginning the process of establishing SOP for statewide hiring initiatives to serve the needs of both our employers and our customers as referenced in the InspiriTec example above.
- 5. The COVID-19 pandemic likely impacted these internship numbers during PY 2020 so strategies for promoting employment included education on health and safety measures to customers, employers, and service providers.

- 2. Partner with the BWPO and individual CareerLink administration bodies to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility of the PA CareerLink centers for equal access for individuals with disabilities.

- a. A strategy related to achieving this goal in PY 2020 consisted of the virtual participation of OVR staff in Workforce Development Board meetings both at a statewide and local level.
- b. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic OVR has been able to assist with providing consultation on the accessibility of the PA CareerLink/CWDS website.
- c. BSOD staff continue to promote programmatic accessibility, through delivery of a comprehensive disability awareness and etiquette training to interested PA CareerLink partners and businesses.

- d. OVR has also made available to all Commonwealth employees an “Introduction to OVR” training to inform staff about the services OVR can offer to individuals with disabilities. OVR staff has received Leadership Training on the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act to include strategies and modules for training businesses and customers on the Act.
  - e. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the PA Governor’s order to telework, OVR staff have been unable to offer and conduct ADA accessibility assessments within the CareerLink sites across the commonwealth during PY 2020.
3. Increase SE and Customized Employment outcomes; evaluate and monitor OVR’s SE policy implementation.
- a. Successful achievement of this goal did not occur in PY 2020. A decrease in SE and CE outcomes is evident in the comparison of PY 2019 and PY 2020 data. As later referenced in B of Section P1, this reduction is likely the result of a closed Order of Selection, reduced customer interest in working during a pandemic, reduced employer demand while many businesses were shut down in PA during PY 2020, and reduced CRP availability due to staffing shortages. Despite the decrease in outcomes, OVR utilized the following strategies to foster an increase in SE and CE outcomes during PY 2020:
    - i. Continuing monthly technical assistance calls with CRPs
    - ii. Adding the provision of virtual SE services (when appropriate) during the COVID-19 pandemic
    - iii. Increasing SE and CE rates to mitigate the economic impacts related to COVID-19 and to help boost CRP availability
  - b. OVR continued to evaluate and monitor implementation of the SE policy through the use of statewide reports and qualitative feedback received from OVR staff and CRPs during regular technical assistance calls. Specialists provided on-going assistance on an individual basis and continued to note the strengths and weaknesses of the current policy. The challenges of the current SE policy as referenced earlier in this Plan started to be addressed through policy revision activities including a statewide SE Workgroup and continued collaboration with CRPs.

## **Goal 2: Increase/Improve Transition Services for Students with Disabilities**

### **A. Increase pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.**

1. OVR continues to approach pre-employment transition services implementation through three avenues: staff, fee-for-service agreements, and contracts. The WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act require that a minimum of 15% of VR Funds must be used for pre-employment transition services. As a result, OVR transition staff are increasing the amount of time spent providing direct services to the pre-EST participants through school and group settings. Pre-employment transition funds for the PY 2019-2020 are estimated to be \$20 million. In the previous PY, OVR spent more than 15% of its VR funds on pre-employment transition services. OVR has increased pre-employment transition services for students by

expanding the number of summer programs since the previous State plan. In addition to the Summer Academies for Visual Impairment, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the AACHIEVE Program that is a collaboration with BSE, most of the local district offices offer summer programs for post-secondary training or work experiences. OVR has developed Pre-Employment Transition Services Provider Agreements so that OVR can utilize over 150 providers to ensure as many students as possible are being served, in addition to the services being provided by OVR staff.

2. Increase opportunities for students to gain workplace skills and community-integrated work experiences. OVR works to increase customer outcomes (26 closures and work-based learning experiences) through: increased engagement with multiple employers; use of permanent and non-permanent OJT's; increased awareness of internships, both paid and nonpaid, and apprenticeships; and involvement with Work Partners at Career and Technology Centers

B. Enhance collaborative relationships with DHS, PDE, and higher education institutions.

**Experience the Employment Connection** – OVR partnered with DHS, ODP, OMHSAS, and PDE in 2019 to develop and offer employees an interagency training opportunity known as Experience the Employment Connection (EEC): Possibilities in Action. This collaborative effort was driven by the Governor's Executive Order on Employment First. EEC's goal is to increase competitive, integrated employment for Pennsylvanians with disabilities, including students with disabilities, by connecting professionals across these systems. Participants learned about staff roles, policies, procedures, funding requirements, and emerging practices related to improving services to adults and high school students. Close to 4,000 interagency professional staff have participated in these training sessions aimed at identifying needs, improving services and competitive employment opportunities for adults and students with disabilities. This interagency program experienced a brief hiatus in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Efforts are again under way between all of the partner agencies to develop a new and revised interagency training to continue to enhance collaborative relationships.

C. Expand BBVS Overbrook School for the Blind Summer Transition Initiative to create summer employment opportunities for transition age students who are blind.

The Overbrook Summer Transition Institute served a total of 21 students in 2018 and 2019. This program provided opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired to engage in paid work experiences not otherwise available to them. The Institute ran for three weeks using braided funding with BBVS and Overbrook funds covering the program costs in 2019. Students participated in various career exploration and work experience activities including a 4-day internship. The students worked at the following 5 locations: Lighthouse Café, Farm to Table Development Office, Couch Tomato Café, Cold Stone Creamery and Weston School. Each student earned \$164.00 for 16 hours of work experiences.

The Overbrook Summer Transition Institute was placed on a temporary hold in 2020 and 2021 due to the social challenges and potential risk associated with the Covid-19 virus. OVR hopes to re-initiate this program in future years if and when the risk is diminished.

D. Research best practices for the implementation of peer mentoring opportunities.

As of September 1, 2019, the Pennsylvania Certification Board is overseeing the certification process for Certified Peer Support Specialists. Peer Support Training was provided to 137 individuals who were 18 years old & over during the period of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019. OVR is working with OMHSAS to identify formal pathways within which to develop training and implementation of Peer Supports within Pennsylvania.

**Goal 3: Increase Community Education and Outreach**

A. Work with PaRC to share best practices and outreach methods to increase participation in the Citizens Advisory Committee meetings.

OVR District Office Administrators continue to be involved in supporting the organization and planning for local Citizen Advisory Committee meetings. OVR Central Office representatives participate regularly on the PaRC Citizen Advisory Committee conference calls and follow-up as needed with local planning.

B. Continue to grow OVR's social media presence. In collaboration with DLI's Press and Digital Teams, OVR's Communication Liaison Team works to share relevant updates, resources and successes via OVR's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts. As of August 2021, OVR has 9,314 followers across all social media channels referenced below. From July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021, OVR posts reached 123,427 individuals. OVR's social media accounts are as follows – Facebook: @PAVocRehab; Twitter: @PA OVR; LinkedIn: PA OVR; and Instagram: @PA OVR.

C. Educate staff on accessibility and technology based upon universal design principles.

Within OVR, we continue to promote accessibility by reviewing forms and presentation materials, revising as needed. We've also advocated for, and achieved revisions to, Human Resource forms (e.g., the request for accommodations), continuing to do so as issues are identified. In October 2018, all OVR staff were invited to attend a virtual training session titled "Designing Accessible Presentations: An Ethical Obligation." To extend information beyond just OVR, OVR staff met with the Commonwealth's Web-Based Training (WBT) team in March 2019 to educate and advocate for accessibility of mandatory Commonwealth trainings. Revisions and collaboration have been ongoing, enhancing the accessibility of WBT training products. In May 2019, OVR extended information beyond Commonwealth staff by offering a similar training to all scheduled presenters for the 2019 Community on Transition Conference to enhance conference accessibility. OVR is an active participant in accessibility-based reviews of current and upcoming Commonwealth WBTs. Since 2017, OVR has, and will continue to, offer web accessibility consultation to the Governor's Office regarding the development of pa.gov and governor.pa.gov sites and content. In 2019, OVR provided accessibility specific reviews of the employment.pa.gov site that hosts employment opportunities for Pennsylvanians. OVR continues to support the ongoing development of CWDS by working with developers to remediate existing accessibility failures and provide feedback regarding future developments.

OVR continues to support staff who use assistive technology by offering in-house or contracted training opportunities to increase staff proficiency. OVR has also developed a partnership with the Bureau of Administrative Services and the Office of Information Technology to remediate in a timely manner DLI forms identified as inaccessible. Raising awareness of document accessibility is an ongoing need that can be addressed one document, one website, one person at a time. The OVR teams actively seize opportunities to enhance accessibility as they arise.

#### **B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES**

Unique challenges appeared between 2019 and 2021 which included the closing of OVR's Order of Selection and the COVID-19 pandemic. The closure of OVR's Order of Selection reduced the number of customers being served by the agency, thus reducing the number of customers receiving the SE services. A short time after the closing of the order, COVID-19 impacted service delivery. OVR staff were restricted to telework status, service provider availability was limited, customers were reluctant to participate in on-site work activities/services, and many employers were shut down and/or reduced operation. The combined effects impeded the achievement of projected goals.

With the low unemployment rate over the past few years, there have been many entry level, lower wage jobs available. However, Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance recipients are reluctant to give up their benefits for a job that will not replace the income and benefits they are currently receiving.

Transportation remains a difficult issue for many job candidates. Since many customers do not have a driver's license or do not own a vehicle, they are dependent upon family and friends, public transportation or other special transportation services to get to and from work. OVR is collaborating with employers to adjust work schedules and with transportation authorities to adjust and/or expand services that better enable OVR customers to become gainfully employed. OVR staff participate on the local transit advisory committees. For example, the Capital Area Transit Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee has developed a subcommittee related to Travel Training for elderly individuals and people with disabilities. OVR is providing training consultation along with disability knowledge and expertise to this committee. The Secretary of Labor and Industry sits on the Governor's Employment First Cabinet Transportation Committee. OVR staff also attend these meetings to support the need for accessible, affordable transportation across the commonwealth for persons with disabilities seeking gainful employment.

Staff turnover and a Commonwealth hiring freeze, continues to adversely impact the agency's job placement expertise. OVR has renewed its emphasis on quality employment outcomes by reinstituting targeted staff training regarding effective employment strategies. The six-part training webinar series focuses on Basic Business Services, Labor Market Intelligence, Customer Job Readiness, Enhancing the Job Search, Effective Business Outreach, and Business Services and Ethical Considerations. It is intended to quickly advance the skills of newly hired VRCs and reinforce the knowledge skills of more experienced staff.

#### **2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:**

##### **A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS**

Successful achievement of this goal did not occur in PY 2020. A decrease in SE and CE outcomes is evident in the comparison of PY 2019 and PY 2020 data. As later referenced in B of Section P1, this reduction is likely the result of a closed Order of Selection, reduced customer interest in working during a pandemic, reduced employer demand while many businesses were shut down in PA during PY 2020, and reduced CRP availability due to staffing shortages. Despite the decrease in outcomes, OVR utilized the following strategies to foster an increase in SE and CE outcomes during PY 2020:

1. Continuing monthly technical assistance calls with CRPs
2. Adding the provision of virtual SE services (when appropriate) during the COVID-19 pandemic
3. Increasing SE and CE rates to mitigate the economic impacts related to COVID-19 and to help boost CRP availability

#### B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Unique challenges appeared between 2019 and 2021 which included the closing of OVR's Order of Selection and the COVID-19 pandemic. The closure of OVR's Order of Selection reduced the number of customers being served by the agency, thus reducing the number of customers receiving SE services. A short time after closing the order, COVID-19 impacted service delivery. OVR staff were restricted to telework status, service provider availability was limited, and customers were reluctant to participate in on-site work activities/services. The combined effects impeded the achievement of projected goals.

#### 3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

During Program Year (PY) 2018-19, OVR served nearly 70,000 individuals with disabilities, worked with over 6,000 employers, and assisted more than 7,400 individuals with disabilities to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment. Additionally, OVR and our partner providers continue to deliver an extensive array of pre-employment transition services to over 25,000 students with disabilities annually across Pennsylvania.

In accordance with WIOA Section 506(b), the performance accountability system requirements of WIOA Section 116 took effect July 1, 2016. However, the U.S. Department of Education exercised its transition authority under WIOA Section 503 to ensure the orderly transition from the requirements under the Workforce Investment Act to the requirements under WIOA. As such, the performance accountability system requirements for the WIOA Title IV VR program went into effect July 1, 2017, at which time OVR began collecting and reporting data related to certain performance indicators under WIOA through the quarterly submission of the federal RSA-911 report.

When this State Plan was developed, only one of the six performance indicators was being reported and published by the RSA in the WIOA Statewide and Local Performance Reports (WIOA Annual Reports): Measurable Skill Gains. Data driving the remaining five performance indicators will be progressively available and reported as part of OVR's WIOA Annual Report over the next four years. As part of the PY 2018 WIOA Annual Reports, expected to be published by the RSA in Spring 2020, two additional performance indicators under WIOA Section 116 will be reported: Employment During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit and Median Earnings During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit. For PY 2020, OVR's published Employment During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit was 25.3% and the Median Earnings During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit were \$5,946.

The RSA published PY 2019-2020 WIOA Annual Reports for each state in June 2020, which contained the Title IV performance under the Measurable Skill Gains indicator. For PY 2020, OVR's published Measurable Skill Gains rate was 17.1% of participants who met the criteria to be included in the indicator.

The 6<sup>th</sup> indicator, "Effectiveness in Serving Employers," will be piloted using 2 of the 3 approaches identified by Section 116 of WIOA. The following 6 Measures will be used to develop the data needed to report on the "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" indicator.

### **Measure #1. Employer Information and Support Services (future use of CWDS Business Design Tool)**

Total estimated number of employers that received annual OVR assistance with:

1. contacts regarding OVR talent pipeline for qualified pre-screened candidates – 4000;
2. job fairs and hiring events for OVR talent in collaboration with One-Stop staff and partners at CareerLinks® and OVR District Offices - 100;
3. coordination of talent acquisition with OVR partners - 100;
4. OVR outreach to CSAVR VR-NET- 50;
5. job and task analysis - 100; and
6. ADA accessibility of worksite and accommodation reviews - 20.

### **Measure # 2. Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development**

Estimated number of employer planning meetings, outreach events, and trainings:

1. promoting collaboration on persons with disabilities employment - 100;
2. Business RoundTable discussions on finding talent, meeting business needs for growth and human capital - 8; and
3. overcoming transportation barriers for persons with disabilities - 10.

### **Measure # 3. Accessing Untapped Labor Pools**

Estimated number of inter-agency contacts, meetings, outreach events and trainings:

1. promoting collaboration on student paid work-based learning experiences - 2888;
2. hiring of veterans with disabilities - 5;
3. hiring of older workers with disabilities - 10; and
4. hiring of ex-offenders served by OVR - 25.

#### **Measure # 4. Training Services**

Estimated consultations or trainings on:

1. ADA as Amended accommodation, accessibility - 50;
2. disability awareness - 50;
3. Section 503 Federal Workforce diversity goals - 10;
4. OJT wage reimbursement - 1241;
5. pre-employment transition services work-based learning experiences - 25,000;
6. supported or customized employment and business-based models to on-board qualified persons with disabilities - 4000; and
7. use of Federal Schedule A in federal hiring and on-boarding - 10.

#### **Measure # 5. Incumbent Worker Training Services, Rapid & Layoff Response**

Incumbent workers must be Most Significant Disability and OVR eligible.

Estimated consultation to employer on referrals to OVR - 0.

#### **Measure # 6 Employer Information and Support Services**

Estimated number of workshops, presentations to businesses on:

1. state or Federal persons with disabilities hiring Tax Credits (WOTC-VR credit) - 300;
2. general availability of OVR talent pipeline on current status 20 job ready customers – 300; and
3. OVR local plan to assist business in talent acquisition of high volume or high demand positions with One Stop CareerLink® and CRP collaboration - 1000.

All BSOD specialists and combined bureau staff will be trained in the use of the CWDS business design tool to create a statewide OVR business services case management system to track the following: all employer contacts, consultations on disability issues, ADA accessibility compliance, people with disabilities recruitment, job fairs, job shadowing, development of work-based learning experiences, and development of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship trainings. All apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships will be eligible for local workforce board approved Eligible Training Provider List designation and individual training accounts that are also accessible to CareerLink served TANF, dislocated workers, veterans, youth, and returning to work homemaker participants.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED



Since January 1, 2016, OVR has awarded more than \$11M to providers to support the development and operation of 24 I&E projects. Of these projects, 23 provided pre-employment transition services to high school students with significant disabilities. The remaining I&E project, supported by joint OVR and ODP funds, provided for staff from 12 community rehabilitation providers to receive training and certification in Discovery and Customized Employment.

To date, 4,801 students with significant disabilities received services through the 23 I&E projects: 302 students entered competitive employment; 74 students entered post-secondary education; and 3 students entered military service. Three I&E Projects provided “transition from school to work” related education, information, support and services through informational sessions and workshops to a total of 4,146 students, parents/family members of transition aged youth, and transition professionals, to facilitate the understanding of and participation in the “school to work transition” process. The informational sessions and workshops were attended by 1,835 high school students with their parents or a transition professional.

Ten I&E projects provided 2,680 high school students with a work-based learning experience and 2,081 students successfully completed a 90-hour work-based learning experience in a competitive employment site in the community. For most of these students, this work experience was their first opportunity to learn work skills, specific job tasks, workplace safety and to interact with employers and co-workers on the job. These 10 I&E contractors exceeded the expectation of providing students with a paid 90-hour work-based learning experience; as successful outcomes, well beyond the scope of these projects, resulted as 197 students obtained competitive employment, 55 students participated in post-secondary education and 3 students entered the military.

#### Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

##### 1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

OVR provides SE services to Pennsylvanians with disabilities, including youth up to age 25, through a network of CRPs. Services provided through these vendor partners are described below.

**Background** Beginning in the early 1980s, OVR developed a system of SE services using a fee-for-service payment system. Initially, 17 CRPs of SE services were funded through a 5-year, OSERS, Title III SE State Change Grant. In the 1990s, SE services expanded to include transitional employment for individuals with significant mental health disabilities through the Clubhouse model and the addition of contracts with CRPs fluent in American Sign Language to serve OVR customers who are deaf. In 1999, OVR moved to a milestone payment method of SE services called “Performance Based Job Coaching” (PBJC), the format of which was developed based on research OVR conducted in the mid-1990s to determine best practices for provision of SE services. PBJC went through review and revision in 2013-14 to improve the format. In 2015, OVR piloted Discovery and Customized Employment to further expand the range of SE services to better serve individuals with the most significant disabilities. A complete overhaul of OVR’s SE policy and procedures occurred from 2016-18 brought about by recommendations of a SE Workgroup and new regulations stemming from WIOA. Changes included a revision of the PBJC milestones and pay structure to correspond with a customer’s job stability, a move from LOUs

with CRPs to a SE Provider Agreement, the inclusion of Discovery/Customized Employment in SE policy, the addition of new SE services to better meet the diverse support needs of OVR customers, and an enhancement of extended services to align with WIOA regulations and improve long-range outcomes. The entire SE process, from referral to reporting and invoicing, was moved to a computerized system which was rolled out July 1, 2018. As of August 2021, there are 155 approved SE providers, with 25 providers approved to render Discovery/Customized Employment services.

**Quality Standards** OVR provides extensive, ongoing training and technical assistance for internal staff and CRP staff on the SE policy and procedures. Trainings are offered in-person and virtually through webinars, videoconferences and conference calls.

Previously, CRPs became SE providers for OVR through an LOU. Monitoring of these CRPs was conducted on a two- and four-year cycle by OVR's Contracts and Grants division using provider report cards, staff surveys, and both desk and on-site reviews. With the move to the new SE system, procedures are under development for monitoring both internal processes and CRPs. Internal monitoring will involve OVR statewide and District Office "report cards" based on data from electronic tracking of service authorizations and payments and individual case reviews with a focus on SE processes and outcomes. External monitoring will include: provider report cards, a District Office survey of provider performance, and on-site monitoring visits.

**Scope and Extent** SE services include assessment, planning/coordinating, job customization, placement, coaching, mentoring, and retention. All services are provided on an individualized basis and specific vocational goals are determined by the individual's needs and preferences. Populations receiving SE includes individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, mental illness, physical disabilities, blindness, deafness, autism and traumatic brain injury. SE services are also available within the special education, mental health and developmental disability service systems. OVR is actively engaged in collaborative relationships with these systems to ensure the provision of effective services, to reduce duplication of efforts, to share resources, and improve employment outcomes for those mutually served by multiple systems.

In Pennsylvania, sources of funding for extended services are available to ensure long term supports for those who require them. For example, ODP and OLTL have funding for extended services for those customers who receive waiver funding through these agencies. Actual funding available from ODP and OLTL varies from county to county. OVR also has a limited amount of funds through state VR money for customers who do not have other sources of long-term funding. Other resources sought for extended service funding are natural supports, SSA work incentives, and private foundations.

## 2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

The determination of an individual's need for extended services begins during the initial assessment phase of a case. At that time, the rehabilitation team – the customer, the customer's family, OVR staff, Case Manager/Supports Coordinator (if applicable), and others – determine possible long-term support needs and resources. As the case progresses, the individual's stability on the job informs the determination of the need for extended services and the timing of provision. Those who reach 80% or better independence on the job are generally considered job stable and the case is followed for 90 days to ensure the expected progression to full independence with natural supports in place. For those at 80% or lower independence on the

job, there is an expectation of need for continued coaching and extended support services. If no other source of funding is available for the individual, OVR can provide extended services up to 24 months for adults using only state appropriated funds and 48 months for students with disabilities using federal VR dollars. Regardless of alternative funding source, OVR continues to serve individuals for a minimum of 90 days after transitioning to extended services. For those individual's with ODP funding, OVR entered into a joint bulletin that dictates when the case can move to ODP-funded extended services and documentation requirements.

#### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY WIOA[14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

*The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry.*

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

*The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry.*

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[19], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

*The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry.  
Ryan Hyde, Acting OVR Executive Director*

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

The Acting Executive Director of The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry.

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

#### FOOTNOTES

#### CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Ryan Hyde
Title of Signatory	Acting Executive Director
Date Signed	April 18, 2022

#### ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.	
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of	

The State Plan must include	Include
WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.	
3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) "is an independent State commission" (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) "has established a State Rehabilitation Council" (Yes/No)	Yes
3.c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3)	
3.e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)	No
3.f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)	No
3.g. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan	
3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities	
3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act	

The State Plan must include	Include
4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)	No
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and	

The State Plan must include	Include
4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))	
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act	
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such	



The State Plan must include	Include
funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act	
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act	

#### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	53.0%	56.0%	55.0%	57.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	47.0%	47.0%	58.0%	48.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,900.00	\$4,900.00
Credential Attainment Rate	2.0%	20.0%	2.5%	21.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	32.0%	39.0%	36.0%	40.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

## VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2006, AS AMENDED BY THE STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT (PERKINS V) (TITLE 20, UNITED STATES CODE (20 U.S.C. 2301 ET SEQ.))

### A. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

#### A. Plan Development and Consultation

**1. Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) engaged local stakeholders in Pennsylvania’s career and technical education (CTE) community to gain their input regarding the 4-year state plan for Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act of 2018 (Perkins V). The selection of the stakeholders began with the Department’s internal Perkins V Planning Committee (Committee) identifying the required stakeholders group and determining who could assist in identifying the members to invite. The Department identified 146 diverse stakeholders, as required under Section 122(C)(1)(A), to serve on this cross-sector planning committee.

To ensure each category of stakeholder was invited, an excel spreadsheet was developed that includes the agency the stakeholder represents, the category the stakeholder fulfills, name, title, email and phone number. The internal PDE team during weekly meetings would review the list and work with partners to ensure each category had multiple representatives on the stakeholder’s committee. All identified stakeholders were invited to all scheduled meetings. Meetings were held at the statewide and regional levels. Participation of stakeholders was tracked using two methods. An electronic registration was used, which required each stakeholder to register their attendance at each meeting. The second method was use of an on-site sign-in sheet at each meeting. The sign-in sheet listed each of the registrants and their affiliation. Participants signed in at each meeting to verify attendance.

Once the stakeholders were identified and contact information was obtained, PDE invited stakeholders to attend an initial convening on March 19, 2019 in State College, PA, to begin assisting the Department with developing the State Plan. The invitation and initial communications noted stakeholders’ role in determining how the state will implement the new regulations and use federal Perkins funds, as well as provided background on the Perkins law for context. A total of 77 individuals from across the state attended the initial Committee

meeting on March 19. The agenda included numerous topics and sought feedback on all areas of the plan.

In addition to the initial Committee meeting, PDE held three stakeholder sessions across the state:

1. • April 9, 2019: Butler County Community College, Butler, PA
2. • April 10, 2019: Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA
3. • April 11, 2019: Harrisburg Area Community College, Harrisburg, PA

Among the 255 individuals who attended the three sessions, 11 percent were business and community members, 24 percent were postsecondary education representatives, and 5 percent were education partners or agencies. Table 1 provides an overview of the attendees by type and location.

**Table 1. Overview of Stakeholder Group Attendees by Type, by Location Stakeholder Group Types Represented**

Location	Business/ Community	Postsecondary Education	Secondary Education	Education Partners	PDE	Total
State College, PA	10	15	35		13	<b>73</b>
Butler, PA	7	19	22	6	3	<b>57</b>
New Hope, PA	5	10	31		4	<b>50</b>
Harrisburg, PA	7	18	35	6	9	<b>75</b>

At each meeting, attendees were asked for feedback on policy decisions related to program accountability and defining meaningful progress. The stakeholders assisted in determining which program quality indicator to select, how flow-through funds should be allocated to Perkins recipients, and whether the state should reserve funds for subawards to eligible recipients in rural areas, areas with high percentages of CTE concentrators or participants, and areas with high numbers of CTE concentrators or participants.

In addition to the Committee meeting and statewide stakeholder sessions, stakeholders had an opportunity to review and submit comment to PDE on preliminary draft state determined performance levels (SDPLs) from November 22-December 6, 2019. Stakeholder Committee members also were invited to participate in a meeting on December 3, 2020 where PDE staff explained the process for establishing the baseline for each indicator and for establishing the SDPLs. PDE used the feedback from the December 3 meeting and the written comment period to develop and establish the SDPLs. The final draft proposed levels then were disseminated to the stakeholders for their review on December 17, 2019. As required under Perkins V, stakeholders had until December 27, 2019 to review the process and baseline and submit written comments regarding how the established levels of performance:

1. Meet the requirements of the law;
2. Support the improvement of performance for all CTE concentrators including each subgroup of students and special population; and
3. Support the needs of the local education and business community.

PDE gathered written public comments on the SDPLs and baselines for each indicator through a designated email account managed by the PDE Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE). The email account link was posted on the Department's website and provided to all stakeholders.

Written stakeholder comments and the Department's response are found in Appendix E.

**2. Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary**

**career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V.)**

The Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education (State Board) is the eligible agency to submit the Perkins V state plan. The State Board is responsible for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education. The State Board is responsible for the planning and development of the Perkins V state plan. Consultation with a different state agency was not necessary.

The State Board was provided a copy of the preliminary draft plan January 8, 2020 which coincided with the public comment period that began January 2, 2020. The State Board reviewed the preliminary draft state plan and took action on the state plan March 18. The State Board did not have any objections. Other state agencies were invited to review and provide comment. Other state agencies did not provide comment or provide objections to the state plan during the public comment period or during the State Board January and March meetings during their public comment period.

**3. Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V.)**

In October 2019, Pennsylvania conducted regional hearings. The public and interested organizations and groups were invited to attend the hearings and present their views and make recommendations regarding the draft state plan. The hearings were held on October 15, 2019 at the Chester County Technical College High School in West Grove, PA; on October 16, 2019 at Harrisburg Area Community College in Harrisburg, PA; and on October 17, 2019 at Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood, PA.

The Department carefully considered each comment and written statement provided at the hearings and used that feedback to inform the next draft of the Perkins V state plan. The Department summary of the recommendations made at the hearings are covered in the State Plan.

The Department posted the draft state plan on the Department's website in an easily accessible, ADA-compliant form. The Department then used a variety of communication methods to notify the field and the public that the draft state plan was available for review (e.g., Pennsylvania Bulletin, email, website, Penn\*Link email system, statewide distribution lists, etc.). The Department also announced the availability of the state plan at meetings of the State Board of Education, Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence, the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, and the Governor's Keystone Workforce Development Command Center, and requested input from the attendees.

PDE accepted public comment on the proposed Perkins V State Plan from January 2-February 3, 2020 under the required 30-day comment period prescribed pursuant to Perkins V, sec. 122. Individuals also had the opportunity to provide public comment in person during the State Board meeting on January 8, 2020.

All public comments were considered and, where applicable, used to inform development of the Perkins V State Plan. The final revision of the draft Perkins V state plan incorporated public comments.

## B. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

### **a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V.)**

State-supported workforce development activities can be characterized broadly in two ways: 1) the activities cross various sectors of the economy and government, and 2) state efforts are targeted to the specific places and populations which most need and benefit from state support in order for Pennsylvania to have a thriving workforce. Career and Technical Education (CTE) exemplifies the cross-sector nature of workforce preparation, bringing together education and industry to ensure students are prepared for in-demand occupations. Other state agencies including PDE, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) contribute to programs that meet the needs of special populations in Pennsylvania, as will be described in more detail below.

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (PAWDB) advises the Governor on building a strong workforce development system aligned with state education policies and economic development goals. The PAWDB is comprised of representatives of businesses as well as the leaders of state agencies who are highly engaged in workforce development activities, including PDE and L&I. Among its activities, the PAWDB supports CTE programs of study.

Career and technical education enables secondary, postsecondary, and adult students to pursue technical education, in conjunction with a comprehensive academic education, that prepares them for high-quality and high-priority occupations. In 2018-19, there were 140 schools and 84 career and technical centers (CTCs) offering 1,723 approved secondary CTE programs statewide, with over 67,000 secondary CTE students enrolled.

CTE is critical to workforce development because of the great number of students engaged, and because all PDE-approved CTE programs lead to industry-recognized credentials. Schools use the PDE Industry-Recognized Certifications for Career and Technical Education Programs Guide to identify industry-recognized credentials aligned to CTE programs in Pennsylvania's career clusters. The list is reviewed annually; in 2018-19, PDE added 12 certifications. In the same year, CTE students earned 39,235 industry credentials.

Pennsylvania has a robust system of CTE Programs of Study. CTE Programs of Study are designed at the state level by PDE in collaboration with employers to provide students with the recommended academic and technical courses needed for employment in an in-demand occupation within one of thirteen career clusters. PDE works with secondary instructors and

postsecondary faculty, as well as business and industry representatives, to develop statewide technical task grids that must be taught as part of the Program of Study. By developing statewide technical standards aligned to industry expectations, Pennsylvania's Statewide Articulation Agreements (SOAR) allow qualified CTE students to receive postsecondary technical credit for coursework completed in high school. Since 2011, a total of 285 qualifying SOAR program graduates have been awarded 1,809 postsecondary credits. PDE has explored ways to expand students' and institutions' ability to take advantage of such articulation agreements in its plan for Perkins V, in order to decrease the cost of a postsecondary degree for CTE students, and enable them to enter the workforce more quickly, fully prepared for the economy's in-demand occupations.

CTE also exemplifies how different workforce development activities combine to better serve special populations of Pennsylvanians. Collaboration among postsecondary career and technical education programs and adult basic education programs encourages students without a high school diploma or equivalent to enroll in eligible career pathway programs.

Other populations specifically served by Pennsylvania workforce development initiatives include community college students, low-income postsecondary students, rural students, and students with disabilities. The career-readiness needs of Pennsylvania residents with disabilities are addressed by the L&I Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Students attending any of Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges who are recipients of TANF or SNAP benefits can take advantage of holistic support to complete their academic program and obtain high-quality employment through a program offered by DHS called Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS). A KEYS student facilitator assists eligible students with identifying career goals, scheduling courses, navigating financial aid, and meeting transportation and childcare needs.

The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) administers the PA-TIP program to provide need-based financial awards to students enrolling in certificate programs less than two years in length for high priority occupations (HPOs) in several industry sectors. PHEAA also has 14 Higher Education Access Partners strategically located throughout the commonwealth to provide postsecondary services to students, families, educators, schools, community partners, and the public. Services include free financial aid presentations and completion sessions, programs to assist students with planning and preparing for postsecondary education, and professional training for school counselors and advisors. The Pennsylvania College Advising Corps also places recent college graduates as full-time advisors in underserved, rural high schools across Pennsylvania to increase matriculation rates of their students.

A targeted regional approach to workforce development in rural areas, where fewer postsecondary resources exist, is provided by Community Education Councils (CECs). These Councils provide program development activities with postsecondary institutions to ensure that residents of rural communities have access to credential-bearing training opportunities. CECs serve as an intermediary and broker of training programs based on identified need and demand.

The cross-sector PAsmart workforce development initiative promotes the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships and invests in postsecondary education and training in computer science and STEM fields. The Next Generation Sector Partnership program, also supported at the local level through PAsmart state grants, encourages trainings that result in a postsecondary credential by requiring all proposals to identify credentials/certifications to be obtained and by making credentials a required outcome measure. These state-funded grant initiatives reach pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, postsecondary students, and adult learners, in addition to Pennsylvanians already in the workforce seeking to gain relevant skills for an in-demand career in which they can earn a family-sustaining wage.

Finally, PDE has developed a long-term strategy to make workforce preparation available and equitable statewide to the youngest generation of Pennsylvanians. All K-12 schools integrate the Academic Standards for Career Education and Work (CEW standards) into curriculum,

addressing career awareness and preparation, career acquisition, career retention and advancement, and entrepreneurship. Pennsylvania is the first state to include a true K-12 Career Readiness Indicator as part of its federal accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act. The Career Standards Benchmark identifies career readiness activities aligned with the CEW standards in all public K-12 schools. This emphasis on career readiness expands younger students' understanding of the career opportunities, and the relevant postsecondary education and training, available to them.

**b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V.)**

Pennsylvania's economic future depends on a strong, skilled workforce able to compete in today's global economy. To remain economically competitive, Pennsylvania must inform its workforce development policies, strategies, and goals using current labor market information and an understanding of the future workforce needs of workers and employers. The commonwealth has a diversified economy with numerous competitive industry clusters and strives to develop a skilled workforce that aligns worker career goals to employer needs and serves those with barriers to employment. The commonwealth's capacity to provide an educated workforce is evidenced by approximately 375 postsecondary educational institutions which collectively enrolled more than 740,000 students in 2017-18. Pennsylvania is an ideal location for families and businesses given its mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas, its proximity to nearly one-half of the nation's population, and strong job markets. While these characteristics of the commonwealth's labor market contribute to its economic strength, they also create an opportunity to develop an increasingly skilled workforce to meet the demands of employers, the career goals of workers, and the needs of our evolving economy.

Pennsylvania's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce are expressed in the sub-goals of its state WIOA plan:

- Expanding registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs;
- Increasing efforts to recruit apprenticeship participants from non-traditional populations, such as women, persons with disabilities, and re-entrants;
- Building a career pathways system by increasing public awareness of the career pathways model and program design;
- Increasing exposure for K-12, postsecondary, and adult learners to career awareness and exploration activities;
- Expanding access to programs that lead to credentials or certifications, such as career and technical education, online education and training programs, dual enrollment programs, or apprenticeships;
- Collaborating across state agencies on career readiness activities, building partnerships across education and business and industry for both students and educators; and
- Identifying and promoting evidence-based models and effective practices for engaging opportunity youth.

To achieve its workforce readiness goals for all Pennsylvania residents, commonwealth leaders recognize that offering support services to special populations is not additional, but integral, to the plan. A priority of the governor and of commonwealth agencies, as outlined in Governor Wolf's PAsmart Grants Framework: Principles and Funding Priorities, which was approved by

the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board in 2018, is “equity, diversity, and inclusion.” Commonwealth workforce development efforts therefore seek to increase access to postsecondary and career and technical education specifically for historically under-represented and under-served students. State-led workforce development initiatives are a combination of meeting needs that already exist, and addressing foreseeable needs proactively by transforming educational systems and providing tailored supports to learners and workers. Information about workforce development efforts tailored to special populations is enumerated in greater detail above in the summary of State-supported workforce development activities.

Over the past four years, commonwealth agencies have engaged thousands of stakeholders across the commonwealth and worked with cross-sector partners from pre-K to postsecondary education, workforce development, and human services to improve career readiness for all students. There are now established structures that can continue to leverage the expertise and resources at the local, state, and federal levels for Pennsylvania’s workforce development.

In 2017, Governor Wolf convened the Middle Class Task Force, comprised of leaders in education, workforce, and economic development systems. The outcomes of the Task Force’s report led directly to the development of the PAsmart initiative, which has invested \$70 million in its first two years in education and training needed for careers in high-growth industries. PAsmart supports the creation of regional workforce development and education partnerships such as STEM Ecosystems, the training of educators in computer science skills so that students are prepared for a high-tech digital economy, the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships, and next-generation industry partnerships. The governor’s office also launched the PAsmart website to serve as a resource for commonwealth residents to identify the tools and resources they need to make education and career decisions.

The Task Force findings, and the governor’s commitment to the vision of “jobs that pay” and “government that works,” also led the governor to establish the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center. The Keystone Command Center is a group of state agency representatives from education, labor, industry, human services, and others, as well as representatives of labor and business. This cross-sector body elevates and seeks to align all workforce development efforts—whether the actions take place under the purview of education, labor and industry, economic development, or private industry partners—with the urgency that workforce issues demand in the current economic climate. The collaborative nature of the body facilitates the identification and elimination of barriers that confront residents of the state seeking to advance in their careers, as well as the barriers that face businesses and education and training institutions seeking to develop the workforce.

Collaboration between the PA Departments of Labor and Industry and Education has leveraged state workforce development policies and federal programs to initiate and grow self-sustaining local initiatives. L&I has partnered with Pennsylvania community colleges to apply for federal grants to increase access to post-secondary education for non-traditional, harder to serve individuals. Each of the community colleges is a Perkins postsecondary recipient and each is expected to leverage investments to enhance access to career pathways. Additionally, in 2019, PDE and L&I each contributed federal funding to a state initiative called Teacher in the Workplace that drives greater work-based learning and career-ready skills development in schools (including CTCs), while fostering self-sustaining local and regional partnerships between educational institutions and businesses.

Building partnerships between the education and industry sectors has been and will continue to be a key state strategy because it provides a mechanism for ensuring that education meets the skilled workforce needs of employers. In career and technical education, there is already communication and collaboration with business and industry representatives, e.g. through the work of Occupational Advisory Committees, making career and technical education programs models for other educational systems in the commonwealth.



In an effort to achieve successful outcomes for Pennsylvania students, workers, businesses, and communities:

- The commonwealth has examined disaggregated data to identify how postsecondary access and affordability vary for different subsets of the population. It found that economically disadvantaged families and single parent households faced some of the highest barriers to accessing and completing a higher education credential, and as a result, committed \$5 million in the Parent Pathways initiative to support low-income parents and families in pursuing higher education. The Parent Pathways model uses a multi-generational approach to provide wraparound services for parents pursuing a postsecondary credential. These supports may include case management, housing assistance, family programming, high-quality childcare, tutoring, help navigating the higher education landscape, and career counseling.
- Institutions that provide career and technical education have made concerted efforts to increase the representation of students in non-traditional programs. These efforts have seen encouraging results so far: the number of female students enrolled in non-traditional CTE programs (i.e., those traditionally enrolled in by male students) rose 5.7 percent over the four years from 2014-15 to 2018-19. The efforts of CTE institutions are mirrored and supported by the efforts of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeships and Training Office to increase the participation of underrepresented apprentices in nontraditional fields.
- The commonwealth has developed a first-of-its-kind program to help members of the state National Guard retrain and reenter the workforce. The Military Family Education Program, better known as the PA GI Bill, provides college benefits to active Pennsylvania National Guard Members. The PA GI Bill provides 10 semesters of tuition-free education to active members of the PA National Guard and their family members. Pennsylvania's commitment to serving National Guard members and their families exemplifies the broader statewide initiative to prepare the citizenry for an evolving workforce, while engaging adult learners and workers to actively drive Pennsylvania's economy forward.

And finally, Pennsylvania is committed to improving coordination and alignment of education and workforce development

1. programs, services, and funding.
  - a. In 2015, the State Board of Education adopted the goal that 60 percent of Pennsylvania residents have a postsecondary credential by 2025.
  - b. CTE drives the commonwealth toward this goal. The number of industry credentials earned by students enrolled in CTE programs increased 43 percent over the four-year period of 2014-15 to 2018-19.
  - c. The Middle Class Task Force, which the governor convened in 2017 to break down silos among education, workforce, and economic development systems, the PAsmart initiative, launched in 2018 to implement the recommendations of the Task Force, and the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center, established in 2019 to carry on the work by specifically addressing barriers across the state and across sectors, all have contributed to increased collaboration and centralization of workforce development programs, services, and funding. These initiatives have been led by the governor and have been supported by labor and business leaders. They have given state agencies opportunities that did not exist before to explore how programs, services, and funding can be better coordinated to serve specific populations.

c. **Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V.)**

- **Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for purposes under section 124 of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V.)**

Federal Perkins V complements current state-supported workforce development activities including cross agency collaboration to align activities. One includes planning initiatives such as expansion of pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, educator-in-the-workplace, and computer science course offerings.

1. The commonwealth has embraced state-local collaboration, cross-sector partnerships, and a focus on barrier remediation to achieve its vision of career pathways to self-supporting, family-sustaining careers. Pennsylvania recognizes the importance of postsecondary credentials as part of such pathways. In 2015, Governor Wolf established the goal that 60 percent of Pennsylvania residents have some form of postsecondary education by 2025, to meet industry demand for skilled workers. In 2016, Pennsylvania's State Board of Education Council on Higher Education passed a Motion to Support this postsecondary attainment goal. To meet this goal, Pennsylvania has aimed to produce nearly 820,000 additional postsecondary credentials between 2017 and 2025. Pennsylvania employs many strategies to help more residents earn recognized postsecondary credentials, including the following:  
Pennsylvania employs many strategies to help more students of all ages earn recognized postsecondary credentials, including the following:
- **Fostering early awareness of postsecondary opportunities:** K-12 schools in Pennsylvania integrate the Academic Standards for Career Education and Work (CEW standards) into curriculum, addressing career awareness and preparation, career acquisition, career retention and advancement, and entrepreneurship. Pennsylvania is the only state to include a true K-12 Career Readiness Indicator as part of its federal accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act. The Career Standards Benchmark identifies career readiness activities aligned with the CEW standards in all public K-12 schools. This emphasis on career readiness expands younger students' understanding of the career opportunities, and the relevant postsecondary education and training, available to them.
  - **Improving access to advanced coursework for all students:** PDE will work to expand the number of students enrolled in at least one advanced rigor course – including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment courses – each year, and to identify opportunities to improve equitable access to such coursework. Governor Wolf established a goal to increase the number of AP tests given in high schools by 46 percent by 2020.
  - **Leveraging networks and resources to guide postsecondary pathways:** Under Pennsylvania's ESSA Consolidated State Plan, LEAs may use Title IV, Part A, and other federal funds, such as Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A, to support college and career

exploration and advising, including hiring school counselors and other support staff to help all students, and especially underrepresented students, have the information and tools they need to gain awareness of college and career pathways and make informed decisions regarding their postsecondary future. Recognizing the critical role school counselors have on student success, PDE also partners with the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), public and private postsecondary institutions, and the Pennsylvania School Counselors Association to identify opportunities for K-12 school counselors to explore data and connect with resources on postsecondary access and success.

- **Improving awareness of college resources through regional partnerships:** The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) has 14 Higher Education Access Partners strategically located throughout the commonwealth to provide postsecondary services to students, families, educators, schools, community partners and the public. Services include free financial aid presentations and completion sessions, programs to assist students with planning and preparing for postsecondary education, and professional training for school counselors and advisors. The Pennsylvania College Advising Corps also places recent college graduates as fulltime advisors in underserved, rural high school schools across Pennsylvania to increase matriculation rates of their students.
- **Career and technical education as a path to industry-recognized credentials:** All PDE-approved career and technical education (CTE) programs lead to industry recognized credentials. Schools use the PDE Industry-Recognized Certifications for Career and Technical Education Programs Guide to identify industry-recognized credentials aligned to CTE programs in Pennsylvania's career clusters.
- **Facilitating postsecondary credit transfer:** The Pennsylvania School Code was amended shortly in November 2019 to require all public institutions of higher education and all public school districts to provide the Pennsylvania Department of Education with the institutions' articulation agreements for inclusion in an electronic database that is web accessible. The amendment also requires the posting of all agreements that award credit for an industry-recognized credential. The purpose of posting these agreements on the web-accessible electronic database is to increase transparency to students and allow them the ability to better plan their educational career. This will improve student's movement among and between institutions and allow them to graduate more quickly by removing the need to re-take courses.

PDE also was a partner with the WIOA Combined State Plan writing. The Department including CTE staff were present at the weekly meetings to develop the WIOA state plan goals. There are five goals in the WIOA state plan. The goals are focused on (a) career pathways, (b) sector strategies and employer engagement, (c) youth, (d) continuous improvement of the workforce development system, and (e) strengthening the One-Stop Delivery system. Each goal aligns with Perkins V activities as well as other Department activities.

Specific Department CTE goals include:

1. Increase academic achievement of students enrolled in CTE;
2. Increase technical attainment of students enrolled in CTE;
3. Increase business engagement in CTE; and
4. Students enrolled in CTE have access to a minimum of one high value industry recognized postsecondary credential.

State Leadership funds support the development and offering of targeted technical assistance that is focused on improving the performance indicators associated with special populations, specifically nontraditional students. The technical assistance is designed for administrators with CTE programs and assists them in examining local data to determine gaps in performance of special populations' categories.

Funds also support regional professional development workshops that support local efforts to attract and retain students in their non-traditional programs. This technical assistance is offered to those schools that receive sanctions letters related to their nontraditional performance indicator. The goal is to provide tools faculty and administrators can use to recruit and sustain to graduation students that are underrepresented in career and technical education programs in both secondary and postsecondary educational institutions.

The funds support individuals in state correctional institutions. Annually, 1 percent of the Perkins program allocation is provided to the state corrections facilities in order to serve youth in Pennsylvania's detention and corrections facilities. The funds support instructional staff at two state correctional institutions (SCI) and Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit (IU) #21. The SCIs and the IU provide career and technical education that leads to trade-based certifications in programs that offer employment opportunities in high demand occupations throughout Pennsylvania. Both provide occupational training, applied academics, employability training, and assessment with the goal of improving the youths' chances of finding employment upon release. The grant recipients provide an annual report that outlines their accomplishments.

The State Leadership Funds also support the recruitment, preparation and retention of CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals. The Department has developed and implemented CTE teacher and administrator certification programs through contractual agreements with three state universities. Each university (Indiana University of Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania State University, and Temple University) operates a Professional Personnel Development Center to focus on the CTE teacher and administrator certifications. Annually, the Centers provide pre-service and in-service professional personnel development services for career and technical educators in the respective regions of the Commonwealth. Each university ensures the certification programs are based on research and cover topics including curriculum development, integration, instructional practices, parental and community involvement, PDE initiatives, and current trends in education.

In Pennsylvania, all teachers and administrators must hold either an instructional or career and technical instructional certification to be employed in a secondary school entity. State standards exist for teacher preparation programs and the teacher preparation programs must align to state standards and ensure the certification programs meet state statutes or regulations. The three Professional Personnel Development Centers prepare CTE teachers and administrators and recommend them to the Department for certifications.

In all three regions of the state, Center staff meetings were held regularly to share "notes from the field" and discuss topics of interest to the schools. Also, professional development experiences are developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment with input from the following sources:

1. Advisory groups made up of volunteers from the group for which the experience is intended; and
2. Evaluative data collected from previous participants in similar activities.

Professional development activities include:

1. Opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills related to the instructors' occupational area so they can provide dynamic, innovative CTE instruction;

2. Discussions related to educational delivery methods and instructional techniques;
3. Resources and current information on PDE BCTE initiatives; and
4. Collaborations and networking opportunities with other education professionals.

In addition, CTE educators are provided technical training on how to access, select, develop, and implement curricula materials that support statewide programs of study and rigorous challenging programs; career pathways; scope and sequence of courses, in accordance with Chapter 339; industry standards; articulation agreements; and other state and federal mandates. The professional development activities are designed to enhance the knowledge, academic integration proficiency, and skills or capabilities of career and technical instructors.

### **State Leadership Funds support the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (TAP).**

This is a statewide initiative to increase the quality and impact of career and technical education in secondary schools and postsecondary recipients. The Department of Education offers a variety of high-quality, research-based activities, and professional education opportunities at no cost to the participating schools. A critical component of the TAP program, as assessed by the participating school administrators, is the deployment of on-site consultants who assist with the implementation of the professional education opportunities. These consultants are called Career and Technical Distinguished School Leaders (CTDSLs). These distinguished leaders are retired superintendents and CTC administrators. They assist schools in increasing the academic and technical rigor of career and technical programs based on practical approaches learned because of authentic experience leading schools. The range of expertise has included high academic and technical curriculum standards, strategies for the delivery of quality instruction, connections to external resources, internal performance accountability, and promoting a culture of learning and professional behavior.

### **Integrating Mathematics into CTE Content**

Integrating Math-in-CTE enhances the mathematical concepts that exist where math naturally intersects with CTE concepts and applications. Research shows that this model has a significant positive impact on student learning in mathematics with no loss to career and technical area content. Integrating math into CTE courses does not add more to the teachers' workload but enhances the rigor and quality of the instruction. Specialized training and coaching will be provided.

### **Integrating Pennsylvania Core Standards for Reading and Writing**

The Pennsylvania Core Standards for Reading and Writing in Science and Technical Subjects provide the foundation for the work. The 20 standards, targeted toward technical reading and writing, are applicable across all program areas. However, in contrast to mathematics, the standards are broader and have a wider range of applications than, for instance, the mathematical concept of scope. Specialized training and coaching will be provided.

1. Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study
  1. **Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V.) Under Perkins V, Pennsylvania will update the 43 state-developed Programs of Study (POS) using the following criteria:**
    1. The POS is developed by stakeholders (business, postsecondary faculty and secondary teachers);
    2. The POS is based on Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes;

3. The POS is aligned to industry standards to ensure relevancy to the workforce and to identify the required technical skills;
4. The POS provides students with an opportunity to earn an industry credential;
5. The POS is aligned to state academic standards;
6. The POS is aligned to employability skills;
7. The POS is aligned to labor market needs;
8. The POS progresses in specificity;
9. The POS includes multiple entry and exit points;
10. The POS operates with credit articulation agreement; and
11. Completion of the POS leads to a recognized postsecondary credential.

For each POS, a committee will be established which includes statewide representation from business and industry, secondary and postsecondary instructors and administrators, and other interested parties. Details of each POS are found on the PDE website[1].

Each POS is based on a CIP title and description. The POS begins with general information that covers all aspects of the industry associated with the POS and progresses to increased occupationally specific information throughout the duration of the program.

Each POS is designed to align to industry standards and credentialing requirements. PDE defines industry standards as standards established by state or national trade or professional organizations or state or federal regulatory bodies accepted by the Department that describe what learners should know and be able to do and describe how well learners should know or be able to perform a task in a specific occupation. PDE works with Perkins recipients to identify applicable industry credentials and certifications that add value to the CTE enrollees' opportunity to become employed. If students do not earn industry credentials/ certifications at the secondary level of the POS, they can earn the industry credentials/certifications at the postsecondary level.

Each POS competency task grid[2] will provide a link to the Pennsylvania In-Demand Occupations as well as a link to the Industry-Recognized Credentials for Career and Technical Education Programs guidebook. At the local level, if a CIP is not aligned to state or regional HPO, not on the Pennsylvania In-Demand Occupations List, or not identified as a Priority or Opportunity Occupation in the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) regional plan, the local recipient must provide the results of the comprehensive needs assessment and how the program(s) meets local economic and education needs including in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The Department works with academic and CTE instructors to align Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards to each POS. The POS-validated competency task grids include the academic crosswalk. Pennsylvania academic standards include the state academic standards for Career Education and Work (CEW), as adopted by the State Board of Education. Each POS addresses career preparation, career acquisition (getting a job), career retention, and advancement and entrepreneurship. Each POS competency task grid will include links to the academic PA Common Core standards, CEW academic standards, and recently released Career Ready Skills. The Department will ensure the POS, secondary through postsecondary, are inclusive of the academic standards and course work during monitoring reviews.

The Department collaborates with L&I to annually prepare labor market data including in-demand occupations. In-demand occupations are those with a large number of job openings or an above-average growth rate without already having an over-supply of existing workers. These

occupations offer a qualified jobseeker a reasonable expectation of obtaining employment in the field.

Occupations on the Pennsylvania In-Demand Occupation List (PA IDOL) are presented in three categories: Today, Tomorrow, and Future. Jobs of Today require a short period of on-the-job training to become proficient and no formal postsecondary training. With some postsecondary training (i.e., certificate, apprenticeship or Associate degree), an individual can obtain employment in a Tomorrow occupation. Jobs of the Future require at least four years of postsecondary education resulting in a bachelor's degree or higher.

After students enroll in a POS, they progress through general information regarding all aspects of the industry associated with a POS to more specific occupational skills and knowledge. As students complete sections of the POS, they can sit for industry certification exams. As students earn recognized postsecondary credentials, they can exit and enter low-skill, semi-skill, middle skill, or advance skill positions. The design of the POS also allows students who exit prior to the advanced skill positions to reenter the POS where they exited.

Each secondary entity (school district, charter school, or CTC) may apply to PDE for approval to offer the state-developed program of study. The Perkins postsecondary entities have been partners in the development of the statewide articulation agreement and alignment of secondary and postsecondary coursework. Through this process, the secondary completers may earn postsecondary credit once enrolled in the postsecondary component of the program of study. Articulation agreements allow high school students to receive postsecondary credit that counts toward graduation for their technical coursework.

The process used to develop the Programs of Study includes the following elements:

1. Incorporate and align secondary and postsecondary programs to workforce needs as follows:
  - a. Using Pennsylvania approved Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Codes;
  - b. By developing a competency list based on an occupational analysis using resources such as O\*NET;
  - c. By aligning with Pennsylvania recognized industry-based credentials or certifications; and
  - d. By securing validation of the local Occupational Advisory Committee.
2. Include coherent and rigorous academic content aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards and relevant CTE content integrated in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses that align secondary and postsecondary education to adequately prepare students to succeed in careers.
3. Include the opportunity for secondary education students to earn postsecondary education credits through dual or concurrent enrollment, articulated credit, or other avenues which lead to a Pennsylvania recognized, industry-based credential, credit bearing certificate or associate or baccalaureate degree.
4. Establish all new state developed CTE programs of study based upon the current PA IDOL lists.
5. Develop articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary educational institutions which shall include:
  1. Content specified in courses offered by the secondary institution that aligns with course content at the postsecondary educational institution. Syllabi and/or competency lists of courses from the institutions involved must be maintained in the appropriate offices.

2. The operational procedures and responsibilities of each party involved in the implementation of the articulation agreement.
3. A student evaluation plan and process including descriptions of required proficiency levels and criteria for measurement.
4. An evaluation plan that includes a review of the agreement, and renewal date not to exceed three years.
5. A description of student admission requirements.
6. Signatures of authorized representatives of participating institutions.
7. On an individual basis, provide options for out of county students to articulate without sanction if equivalent articulation elements are satisfied.

Each of Pennsylvania's 43 programs of study was developed in phases and is reviewed every three years. Phase III Programs of Study were revised for the 2018-19 program year. Through this revision process, Pennsylvania ensures Programs of Study are aligned to key elements of Perkins V and meet the federal Perkins V definition.

Each POS offers a planned, non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical courses. Technical courses provide occupational skill and work-related tasks that would be performed in the workplace. The PDE-approved sequence is planned, non-duplicative technical instruction (simple courses to increasingly complex courses) within a specific CIP that progresses from general technical program knowledge of all aspects of an industry to occupationally specific content. A random menu of electives does not meet state or Perkins V requirements for a POS. Introductory competency tasks will be identified on each POS competency task grid. Students, parents, teachers, school counselors, and others will be able to identify postsecondary partners with programs of study aligned to secondary programs of study. To view current advanced credit opportunities articulated with postsecondary educational institutions, go to the equivalency search results at [CollegeTransfer.net](http://CollegeTransfer.net).

Each POS has multiple entry and exit points. Secondary students can enter and exit a POS throughout high school. Upon graduation, students who complete a POS exit with a high school diploma and an industry credential. Articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary CTE programs of study allow students to continue with their POS after graduation and earn an advanced credential or degree.

Under Perkins V, the POS will be revised, where appropriate, to include technical dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment courses at the high school that lead to postsecondary credit or advanced standing in a postsecondary educational institution. Each Local Application will demonstrate how the federal Perkins funds will be used to expand opportunities for CTE concentrators to participate in accelerated learning programs that include dual and concurrent enrollment, early college high school, or early postsecondary opportunities.

Locally developed and implemented articulation agreements will be recognized in addition to the statewide articulation agreement. Articulation agreements are defined by the regulation as

(4) ARTICULATION AGREEMENT.-- The term "articulation agreement" means a written commitment--

(A) that is agreed upon at the State level or approved annually by the lead administrators of--

(i) a secondary institution and a postsecondary educational institution; or

(ii) a subbaccalaureate degree granting postsecondary educational institution and a baccalaureate degree granting postsecondary educational institution; and



(B) to a program that is--

(i) designed to provide students with a nonduplicative sequence of progressive achievement leading to technical skill proficiency, a credential, a certificate, or a degree; and

(ii) linked through credit transfer agreements between the 2 institutions described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A) (as the case may be).

The local agreement must be developed by the secondary schools and postsecondary educational institutions that recognize secondary technical education for postsecondary credit that counts toward graduation. Secondary recipients will report dual credit earned in the Pennsylvania Information Management System.

The Department will maintain the current statewide articulation agreement that provides students enrolled in CTE with the opportunity to earn college credit that counts toward graduation for their secondary coursework if they enroll at the postsecondary partner. This aligns with the state requirement to implement articulation agreements as part of a CTE program of study. The criteria for the statewide agreement have changed and now require credit articulation with a minimum of 9 credits for secondary technical coursework that count toward graduation and CIP to CIP-related offering.

When a state-developed program of study does not exist, local articulation agreements will be developed by the secondary and postsecondary recipient. Each local articulation agreement will meet the federal definition of program of study and operate under a credit articulation agreement. The local agreement can award any credit amount greater than or equal to 6 credits, of which at least 3 credits must be for technical coursework. All credits included in the agreement must count toward postsecondary graduation. The local agreement can be CIP to CIP or CIP-related. This should expand the opportunity for students who seek to pursue postsecondary education.

When both the statewide and local agreements are not possible due to restrictions set by third party accreditors or lack of a secondary program, postsecondary institution(s) will engage secondary school(s) in alignment activities to ensure secondary students are ready to enroll in entry-level postsecondary coursework. Alignment activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The postsecondary institution provides secondary students with the postsecondary entrance exam at the end of their junior year.
- The postsecondary institution provides a curriculum for low-performing students to take in the secondary setting in preparation to enroll directly in first-level courses at the postsecondary level.
- The secondary and postsecondary institutions develop a dual enrollment agreement.
- The institutions develop an articulation agreement that awards fewer than six credits which count toward students' postsecondary graduation.

The demonstrated alignment activities must be designed to ensure that CTE students are able to enroll in entry-level postsecondary coursework in their major of choice. In summary, there are 3 avenues that lead to greater secondary and postsecondary alignment. The following is intended as a guide to secondary and postsecondary entities. If the secondary and postsecondary POS are an exact CIP to CIP match, or a CIP to CIP-related match, and a minimum of 9 technical credits can be articulated, and all articulated credits count toward the student's postsecondary graduation,

then use the statewide articulation agreement.

If the secondary and postsecondary POS are an exact CIP to CIP match, or a CIP to CIP-related match, and a minimum of 6 credits can be articulated, and at least 3 of the articulated credits are technical credits, and all articulated credits count toward the student's postsecondary graduation, then use the local articulation agreement.

If fewer than 6 credits that count toward postsecondary graduation can be articulated, or fewer than 3 technical credits can be articulated (e.g., if an external accreditation or licensing body precludes the articulation of secondary technical credits), then develop a local agreement that demonstrates alignment activities to ensure that secondary completers are prepared to enroll in the entry-level postsecondary courses.

1. **Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 132 will:**
  - a.
    - i. **Promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;**
    - ii. **Expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and**
    - iii. **Support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V).**

PDE will continue to use the existing secondary program approval process. Each secondary entity that seeks program approval must provide evidence that the CTE POS or CTE program aligns with local workforce development needs and that the program prepares students for employment and is supported by local employers.[3] The Department will look for alignment to local workforce needs and representation from local or regional employers from the program related industries on the Occupational Advisory Committee (OAC). To receive funding, each Perkins recipient must offer programs of study in at least three different career fields.

During the 2021-2022 year, Perkins postsecondary recipients will seek approval through the electronic approval system. Until the system is finalized, the Department will utilize an existing postsecondary database that provides a list of Programs of Study that postsecondary educational institutions offer and are recognized as approved occupational programs. The occupational programs must meet the Perkins V definitions of Career and Technical Education and "Program of Study." The list demonstrates that the programs have been approved by the institutions Board of Trustees, accrediting authorities (national, regional or program specific [NAECP] accrediting authorities), and PDE/State Board for Career and Technical Education.

The criteria found in the postsecondary electronic approval system include Labor Market Need, Summary of Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Program Content and Industry Standards, Student to Instructor Ratio, Equipment and Supplies, Safety Practices, Performance Indicators, Certifications Available to Students, and Instructor Credentials.

Since each CIP is aligned to Pennsylvania in-demand occupations, the postsecondary portion of the POS is aligned to workforce needs.

According to PDE regulation, each secondary CTE program and POS is approved for a 5-year period. At the end of the 5-year cycle, the secondary school must seek re-approval. As part of the re-approval process, the secondary school must document the workforce needs and provide evidence that the program is supported by local employers and the local workforce development board. For each approved program the school also must provide data that

demonstrates the program meets local economic and education needs including in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Schools must provide report(s) prepared by the local workforce development board demonstrating that the program prepares graduates for regional in-demand occupations.

Another standard that must be met for re-approval of a state secondary CTE program is to establish and meet levels of performance on several accountability indicators, as determined by the levels established for the Perkins local application. Each secondary recipient reports annually on the level of performance and examines the status of meeting the targets. Four of the indicators used for program approval and re-approval at the secondary level focus on academic and technical skill attainment. The school examines data related to challenging state academic standards adopted under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as measured by the academic assessment and CTE concentrators who graduate high. In addition, the school examines data related to the state mandated end-of CTE POS assessment which measures student technical achievement. If they do not meet levels of performance, they must provide a compliance plan that indicates how they will meet levels of performance and promote continuous improvement over the coming year.

For state program re-approval, each secondary Perkins recipient's performance on accountability measures is reviewed at the recipient and program level. This review and analysis ensure the Perkins recipient is meeting the targets and allow the recipient to ensure the needs of each special populations category is being met. This method also allows the Department to determine if it needs to direct resources to address a category of special population to ensure all special populations' needs are being met. The Perkins recipient provides evidence of this when they submit their local application and during on-site reviews.

Additional state secondary CTE program approval criteria include:

1. Description of the program or POS and demonstration of standards-based philosophy;
2. Evidence that the instructional equipment is comparable to industry needs;
3. Evidence of the length of time students will be scheduled into a program;
4. Evidence that each secondary CTE teacher will hold a valid certificate for the teacher's assigned position;
5. Evidence that adequate resource material will be available to support the instructional program plan as required by program accrediting authorities, if applicable, or recommended by the OAC;
6. Evidence that supports, services, and accommodations will be available to disadvantaged, disabled, or limited English-speaking students;
7. Evidence that school entities will provide students adequate supports to meet academic standards; are consistent with the student's individual education plan (IEP), when applicable; and that instruction in these academic areas at all school entities where the student is enrolled is appropriate to the chosen area of occupational training;
8. Evidence of articulation between secondary and postsecondary educational institutions within a service area and system promoting seamless transition to ensure the maximum opportunity for student placement including opportunities for concurrent enrollment or dual enrollment or other strategies that promote acquisition of postsecondary credit while still in high school;
9. Evidence of program sponsorship or involvement, or both, in Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs);

10. Evidence, if a program submitted for reapproval is reduced in hours, that the reduction in hours will not result in a less effective education program being offered;
11. Evidence that joint planning occurs between the CTC and school district of residence around the academic and other needs of attending students; and
12. Evidence that students are following an educational plan and have a career objective.

As part of the annual local application submission, each recipient is required to address special population's student academic performance, technical skill attainment, and access to high-skill, high wage, high-demand education and training. The recipients indicate how Perkins funding accommodates students with disabilities, English Learners, and students who are economically disadvantaged as well as each category of special populations, as required under Perkins V. Department staff then ensure each Perkins recipient's local plan addresses the areas of need.

PDE is responsible for reviewing and approving Adult CTE programs. Similar to the secondary program approval process, Perkins recipients offering Adult CTE programs must demonstrate how each program meets local or regional labor market need. The program curriculum must be planned and developed in consultation with the community and business representatives. Each program must provide evidence that it is aligned to industry standards and that students are eligible to sit for industry credential exams. Each program also must have instructional materials and equipment that sufficiently meet industry standards.

Specific criteria for assessing the extent that the local application will promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment are as follows:

The criteria for assessing the extent that the local application will promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment are as follows.

#### Secondary Application Review Criteria:

1. The action plan demonstrates meaningful progress on performance indicators including all subgroups. These are the activities that will be carried out during the current fiscal year.
2. The end-of-year performance report demonstrates meaningful progress on performance indicators including all subgroups. The performance report explains how the grant recipient implemented activities to demonstrate meaningful progress.

#### Postsecondary Application Review Criteria:

1. Review the academic achievement and technical attainment objectives and ensure the activities support meaningful progress.
2. Review the academic achievement and technical attainment objective and review the outcome measures the recipient identifies, which can include graduation rate, completion rate, transfer out rate, occupational license or technical certificate earned, academic achievement, technical skill attainment.

Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, postsecondary Perkins recipients also will enter program information in the Department's electronic approval system and provide information on each program that Perkins V funds will support. PDE will review and act on each postsecondary program the 2021-2022 program year. Program approval includes information on: Labor Market Need, Summary of Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Program Content and Industry Standards, Student to Instructor Ratio, Equipment and Supplies, Safety Practices, Performance Indicators, Certifications Available to Students, and Instructor Credentials.

As the Department approves and re-approves secondary CTE programs, secondary Perkins recipients must demonstrate compliance with equity and access standards. This includes

providing evidence that services and accommodations will be available to disadvantaged, disabled, or limited English-speaking students enrolled in CTE programs and supported by the district of residence, in accordance with applicable law, service agreements, and student IEPs. Re-approval requires evidence that school entities provide students with adequate support to meet academic standards, as determined by Pennsylvania State Board of Regulation Title 22, Chapter 4, and, when applicable, are consistent with the student's IEP, and that instruction in these academic areas at all school entities where the student is enrolled is appropriate to the chosen area of occupational training.

Review of the special populations section of the application will require the recipient to describe how the recipient is addressing the expansion of access to special populations.

The Department will use the following criteria for assessing the extent by which a Perkins recipient is expanding access to CTE for special populations:

1. Targeted activities support expansion of access for special populations to CTE, as demonstrated in the special population objectives and activities section of the application; and
2. Outcomes demonstrate meaningful progress to increase expanded access to special populations into CTE programs, as presented in the special populations objectives and activities and outcome measures sections of the application.

Pennsylvania collects data on special populations categories by Perkins recipient and by program. Based on the past three years of data, the overall enrollment in the special populations categories associated with Perkins V continues to increase. See Tables 2 and 3. Following are a list of specific state strategies used to approve CTE programs locally and the criteria used to determine the extent a local application will expand access to CTE for special populations:

1. **Department emphasis on special populations and analysis of performance levels on each of the Perkins V indicators by Perkins recipient.**  
**Through the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, the local Perkins recipients will conduct an evaluation of the use of Perkins funds, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The evaluation will be part of the local application. Department staff will analyze each Perkins recipient's impact on each of the special populations categories including meeting locally determined levels of performance.**

As part of the annual local application submission, each recipient is required to address special population's student academic performance, technical skill attainment, and access to high-skill, high wage, high-demand education and training. Recipients indicate how their use of funds accommodates students with disabilities, English Learners and economically disadvantaged students. Staff then ensures each Perkins recipient's local application addresses the areas of need.

1. **Department review of Perkins performance levels during state re-approval of CTE POS and programs.**

For state program re-approval, each Perkins recipient's performance on accountability measures is reviewed at the building and program level. This review and analysis ensure the Perkins recipient is meeting the targets and allow the recipient to ensure the needs of each special populations category is being met. This method allows the Department to determine if it needs to direct resources to address a category of special population to ensure all special populations' needs are being met.

1. **Department emphasis on equal access during on-site reviews.**

PDE staff visit Perkins recipients to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. The regulations outline the expected standards of development, admission, and operation of quality CTE programs. The qualitative review ensures recipients designed CTE programs to enable special populations to enroll without discrimination and to prepare for further education and training in occupations aligned to Pennsylvania industry sectors.

#### **1. Department emphasis on equity in technical assistance and professional development.**

The Department has a partnership with the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators (PACTA). PACTA representatives serve on the BCTE strategic planning committee and assist in identifying action steps the Bureau, with PACTA's assistance, can take to improve student academic and technical achievement, increase business engagement, develop K-12 pathways, serve special populations students, address academic and technical proficiency, and expand career development. Department provides PACTA with support and input into professional development and technical assistance for instructors and administrators in CTE settings.

Each year BCTE holds the statewide "Integrated Learning Conference: The School to Career Connection" to highlight academic and technical integration strategies. The conference has concurrent sessions and consists of six strands focused on the following educational topics: 1) programs of study; 2) school counselor; 3) special populations (non-traditional, English Learners, economically disadvantaged, homeless, youth aged out of foster care, etc.); 4) academic integration; 5) teacher effectiveness; and 6) instructional leader.

The Department also supports the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Education Special Populations (PACTESP) annual conference. The purpose of the conference is to provide professional development to CTE and regular education personnel to increase and align support and services to special populations students. Sessions are designed for secondary and postsecondary settings. BCTE annually provides a pre-conference workshop on supporting special populations students so that they can be successful in CTE programs and future employment.

The Department's annual Data Summit offers attendees an opportunity to learn, network, ask questions about, and discuss education data with peers and leaders from across the state and nation. Keynote speakers and breakout sessions are strategically coordinated to provide attendees with information, resources, and tools on a wide variety of topics that change each year. Each year attendees explore topics such as data governance, data reporting and quality, data-informed decision making, and more. The goal is for each attendee to experience impactful professional learning opportunities, gain technical skills, and return to their school community with a better understanding of data and how they can use it to support and benefit the students they serve.

Regional professional development workshops are provided to support local efforts to attract and retain students in their non-traditional programs. These programs provide faculty and administrators with tools they can use to recruit and sustain to graduation students that are underrepresented in CTE programs in both secondary and postsecondary recipients.

#### **1. Department participation on the State Leadership Transition Committee.**

The State Leadership Transition Committee is an interagency committee comprised of representatives from the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Human Services, Health, and Labor and Industry. The committee established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote interagency collaboration and cooperation to assist students and young adults with any type of disability as they transition to a job, postsecondary education, or independent living. The Transition Committee supports 70 Local Transition Coordinating Councils (LTCC) across Pennsylvania with identifying potential supports and services for transitioning students.

# 1. Department support and alignment of Nontraditional Occupations to POS.

Nontraditional occupations refer to jobs that have been traditionally filled by one gender. Within nontraditional occupations individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed. Examples are males in nursing and childcare or females in technologies and plumbing. Promoting nontraditional career opportunities opens doors for every individual. A list of Non-Traditional Occupations by POS is located on the PDE website.

The Department has worked with Commonwealth Media Services to develop recruitment materials that can be used by the Perkins recipients. The recruitment materials will be completed by June 2020 and disseminated by August 2020.

In conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, which has sought to expand the representation of nontraditional workers in apprenticeships, PDE has sought to expand access to, and equity and inclusion in, nontraditional fields for learners. A state workforce development initiative called PAsmart has invested \$70 million since 2019 in apprenticeships, industry partnerships, and STEM education, with an emphasis on expanding access and inclusion to nontraditional populations in technical career fields. \$40 million of PAsmart funds have been granted to pre-Kindergarten through postsecondary educational entities for projects designed to increase the participation of underrepresented students, including girls and women, in STEM and computer science.

[1]Development of Pennsylvania POS Framework

[2]Pennsylvania Program of Study Competency Task Grids

[3] Program Approval – Section 339.4 (22 Pa. Code § 339.4)

by School Year

Title	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Overall Increase or Decrease
<b>Total Secondary Enrollment (9-12th Grade)</b>	546,617	541,921	538,117	-1.60%
<b>Secondary CTE Enrollment</b>	67,648	67,294	67,248	-0.60%
<b>Percent Enrolled in CTE</b>	12.40%	12.40%	12.50%	1.00%
<b>CTE Participants (At least 10% of the program earned)</b>	64,166	63,847	63,601	-0.90%
<b>Female</b>	26,714	26,574	26,562	-0.60%
<b>Male</b>	37,452	37,273	37,039	-1.10%

Title	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Overall Increase or Decrease
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native</b>	147	163	165	12.20%
<b>Asian</b>	820	872	884	7.80%
<b>Black or African American</b>	8,304	8,439	8,071	-2.80%
<b>Hispanic</b>	6,868	7,247	7,366	7.30%
<b>Multi-Racial</b>	1,089	1,114	1,230	12.90%
<b>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</b>	34	38	48	41.20%
<b>White</b>	46,904	45,974	45,837	-2.30%
<b>Disabilities Status</b>	17,825	17,899	17,975	0.80%
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	31,849	33,644	33,640	5.60%
<b>Single Parents</b>	302	231	213	-29.50%
<b>Displaced Homemakers</b>				N/A
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	1,192	1,301	1,651	38.50%
<b>Migrant Status</b>	30	37	31	3.30%
<b>Nontraditional Enrollees</b>	8,255	8,183	8,295	0.50%

Sources: PA Enrollment Reports, CTE Enrollment, Consolidated Annual Perkins Report

Title	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Overall Increase or Decrease
<b>Postsecondary CTE Enrollment</b>	75,563	72,804	70,627	-6.50%
<b>CTE Participants (At least one credit of the program earned)</b>	70,247	67,088	65,656	-6.50%
<b>Female</b>	40,697	37,375	38,024	-6.60%



Title	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Overall Increase or Decrease
<b>Male</b>	29,550	29,713	27,632	-6.50%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
<b>American Indian / Alaskan Native</b>	214	195	193	-9.80%
<b>Asian</b>	1,821	1,814	2,265	24.40%
<b>Black or African American</b>	12,248	10,719	12,150	-0.80%
<b>Hispanic</b>	5,803	5,938	6,760	16.50%
<b>Multi-Racial</b>	1,320	1,451	1,643	24.50%
<b>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</b>	92	81	79	-14.10%
<b>White</b>	41,715	40,140	37,344	-10.50%
<b>Unknown</b>	7,034	6,750	5,222	-25.80%
<b>Disabilities Status</b>	3,521	3,495	3,511	-0.30%
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	32,382	30,087	31,279	-3.40%
<b>Single Parents</b>	5,865	5,391	5,695	-2.90%
<b>Displaced Homemakers</b>	618	614	452	-26.90%
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	1,400	1,606	1,552	10.90%
<b>Migrant Status</b>				N/A
<b>Nontraditional Enrollees</b>	12,240	11,828	11,191	-8.60%

Sources: PA Enrollment Reports, CTE Enrollment, Consolidated Annual Perkins Report

Employability skills are addressed in each program of study through existing state regulation. At the secondary level each school district, charter school, and CTC must include the CEW academic standards adopted by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. These academic standards include knowledge and skills of career awareness and preparation, career acquisition or getting a job, and career retention and advancement.

The state also developed a K-12 continuum for career readiness skills, in cooperation with the Department's Office for Safe Schools and cross-sector committee comprised of representatives from Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), PA Keys, Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network, Berks Intermediate Unit, and L&I. The Career Readiness Skills (CRS) include self-awareness and self-management, establishing and

maintaining relationships, social problem-solving skills. All schools are asked to incorporate the CRS into existing curriculum, and are found on Career Ready PA.

All postsecondary Perkins recipients also must include employability skills in the CTE program of study. The state will collect and disseminate promising practices to assist postsecondary recipients to include employability skills in the CTE POS. The Department will provide a link to the employability skills on the finalized technical skills task grids.

Below are the criteria the Department will use to assess the extent to which the local application supports the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways:

1. Review of the employability skills section and ensure the activities support inclusion of employability skills in the CTE program of study.
2. Review the employability skills section and review the outcome measures the recipient identifies as supporting the inclusion of employability skills in the CTE program of study.

1. **Describe how the eligible agency will:**

a.

- i. **Make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand.**

Pennsylvania has numerous resources that address programs of study and provide related guidance and advisement on careers. The materials are available to students, families, and secondary and postsecondary education partners in a variety of formats and languages and are ADA compliant.

Resources include:

1. Information on college credits earned through the CTE POS[4]
2. SOAR Flyer
3. SOAR Bulletin
4. Spanish SOAR Bulletin
5. Career Ready PA

Each resource notes the availability of college credit for time spent in the secondary CTE program of study. Pennsylvania will revise the resources to reflect the revisions to programs of study required under Perkins V. The resources then will be disseminated by email and posted on the Department of Education's and partner websites. These materials are also duplicated and sent to secondary and postsecondary educational institutions offering the CTE POS.

The Department developed several toolkits to assist schools with providing Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, and work-based learning opportunities for students. The following toolkits are available on the PDE website:

Toolkits (pa.gov)

Pennsylvania is developing information on career pathways that will be used during the 2019-20 school year. The template can be used by the recipients with parents/guardians, student and others.

### Pennsylvania Career Pathways

#### Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences, General, CIP 19.0101 Sample Scope & Sequence (pa.gov)

The Department continues to work with instructors, and career and school counseling staff as they implement the state CEW academic standards. Local schools are developing and finalizing comprehensive K-12 guidance plans that have been approved by the district school board. The Department also maintains a number of resources for counselors [5] to use and are found on the Department website.

In addition, the Career Education and Work assessment continues to be available through NOCTI to address student understanding of the CEW academic standards areas – Career Awareness and Preparation, Career Acquisition, Career Retention and Advancement, and Entrepreneurship.

The Department provides resources to assist all K-12 schools in Pennsylvania with implementing the CEW standard strand of career awareness and preparation.

PA Career Zone is a free, interactive website that middle school and high school students can use to explore the careers of interest and develop an individualized portfolio. The website has a skills profiler for students to assess their skills and interests and then connect with careers aligned to those strengths. They also can use the site develop a printable resume, find postsecondary programs, and determine if a given salary will support a preferred lifestyle.

In 2019, the Department expanded PA Career Zone to include an elementary section called Up the Ladder. Up the Ladder using gaming elements and badges to encourage young students to exploring career pathways. The animated interface is especially colorful, interactive, and responsive. Students can go in depth into various careers and learn what it takes to succeed in each of them. The young students' experience is guided with an optional voice narration for lower reading levels. Up the Ladder is an excellent way to begin career discussions in the elementary grade levels and sets students up for success as they start exploring the rest of the PA Career Zone offerings in middle school.

The Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Career Education and Work are fully integrated into Up the Ladder and PA Career Zone. As such, they provide teachers essential tools to show the relevance of each student's educational experiences to their individually chosen career pathways.

In November 2018, Pennsylvania launched a new data dashboard called Future Ready PA Index to provide the public with a more comprehensive look at how Pennsylvania's schools are educating students. The dashboard illustrates student and school success using the following measures:

- State Assessment measures demonstrate student performance on state assessment exams and include data from the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS), which represents the academic growth of students.
- On-Track measures highlight regular attendance and indicate progress in reading and math and in English Language proficiency.
- College and Career-Ready measures illustrate how well students are being prepared for postsecondary success by showing access to rigorous coursework (i.e., Advanced Placement, dual credit and CTE SOAR programs) and by identifying industry-based

credentials earned by all public high school graduates. The Postsecondary Outcomes indicator shows the percent of high school graduates enrolling in postsecondary education, enlisting in the military and entering the workforce within 16 months of graduations.

The data for each indicator is disaggregated by student group – including economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, students receiving special education services, and racial and ethnic groups. This allows parents and their communities to better understand student performance among the different groups and for schools to identify student groups where additional support may be needed.

Based on a meeting with Community College representatives, the Department will design a strand for the Integrated Learning Conference for Perkins Postsecondary recipients that focus on promising practices on student engagement, Local Comprehensive Needs Assessment, data collection, sharing data, non-traditional, ADA, student retention.

1.

a.

- i. **Facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points.**

Programs of Study are developed at the state level. The Department organizes statewide committees comprised of secondary instructors and postsecondary faculty along with business representatives for each POS content area. The members of the statewide committees discuss their respective program content and define the technical content of POS, with particular focus on the needs of business and how the technical content is delivered at the secondary level and aligns to the postsecondary technical content.

The Department continues to better align courses to increase flexibility of the courses and experiences so they can be shared across multiple Programs of Study and to shift with industry needs in general. During the statewide Programs of Study committee members identify potential courses and how the courses align to increase flexibility for students.

The Department continues to examine needs around the development and coordination of the Programs of Study. During state plan development process, stakeholders recommended developing or identifying resources that help students understand the full scope of careers within a pathway, the multiple entry and exit points, and how the full career pathway affects personal finances. The Department will ask the statewide committee to recommend resources that Perkins recipients can use to assist students in understand the full scope of careers within a pathway. The resources will be disseminated to the schools and postsecondary educational institutions.

The Department provides multiple opportunities for schools and postsecondary partners to highlight promising practices regarding collaboration. One example is the annual Integrated Learning Conference, which includes a Program of Study strand. The annual Standards Aligned Systems Conference also brings together secondary and postsecondary representatives to share their promising practices. The annual Department run Data Summit provides the opportunity for secondary and postsecondary to collaborate and meet to discuss the use of data to increase opportunities for students and improving student achievement.

The Department collects promising practices related to career development and postsecondary preparation, such as college and career pathways, employability skills, work-based learning,

postsecondary transitions, and engagement of business, community, workforce provides these promising practices. The resources then are made available via the CTE Resources.

During August 2019, the Department held a statewide meeting that examined the existing Program of Study development process and statewide articulation agreement. Based on the statewide meeting the Department is making the following changes that will lead to higher quality CTE as well as increase collaboration among secondary, postsecondary and business in the development and coordination of statewide Programs of Study.

Based on the August 14 postsecondary meeting and request for postsecondary to develop local articulation agreements, the Department will recognize locally developed and implemented credit articulation agreements in addition to the statewide articulation agreement. The local agreement must be credit articulation agreements as defined in Perkins V and recognize secondary technical education for postsecondary credit that counts toward postsecondary graduation. The local agreement can award any credit amount but not less than 6 credits, of which 3 credits must be technical credits. The local agreement can be CIP to CIP or CIP-related. This should expand the opportunity for students who seek to pursue postsecondary education. Secondary recipients will report dual credit earned in the Pennsylvania Information Management System.

classification of instructional program (CIP) to CIP or CIP-related program and the awarding of a minimum of 9 transcribed credits for secondary technical coursework that count toward postsecondary graduation.

1.
  - a.
    - i. **Use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate.**

PDE asks each recipient to demonstrate how each program that benefits from federal Perkins funds meets workforce needs. The purpose is to set a standard of measure to determine the alignment of the POS to real-world industry need. The Department provides database links in the local application to ensure consistency in the alignment and has established a benchmark.

Below are the questions related to workforce need that recipients must complete as part of the local application:

1.
  - a. What are the occupations for which this partnership will prepare participants?  
Applicants should use the link to cite SOC codes for the relevant occupations:  
Benchmark:  
Evidence the occupation is connected to the Program of Study.
  - b. What is the anticipated Entry Annual Wage that an employee can receive by entering a specific occupation listed in question a.?  
Applicants should use the link to cite the wages for the relevant occupations:  
Benchmark:  
Evidence that the state Entry Annual Wage for each identified occupation is \$25,000 or higher.
  - c. What is the projected number of new job openings that are expected for the occupations listed in question a., between 2016 and 2026?

Applicants should use the link to cite the projected number of job openings for the relevant occupation:

Benchmark:

Demonstrate that the projected enrollment and graduate numbers meet or exceed workforce needs in the Workforce Development Board region

1.

a.

i. **Ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations.**

The Department ensures each secondary POS meets state and federal regulations. All secondary schools that offer Department-approved Programs of Study must have an admissions policy regarding entrance to a CTE program. The policy must state whether enrollment is unlimited or limited. If enrollment is limited, the admissions policy must include nondiscriminatory eligibility requirements for the purpose of predicting a student's success in a program. The admissions policy must include a nondiscriminatory selection procedure, as required by current federal and state statutes, regulations and guidelines. Postsecondary recipients have open admissions policies where the only requirement is students have a high school diploma or a high school equivalency credential.

During on-site reviews, Department staff review the secondary school's admissions policy to confirm one exists and that it provides equitable access to the Programs of Study. When it is discovered that an admissions policy does not exist, the Department provides a sample admissions policy for secondary schools to use to develop their School Board approved admissions policy.

The Department also conducts Civil Rights reviews that ensures Programs of Study are accessible and that individuals are not discriminated against based on the ground of race, color, or national origin. The Department developed a review process to measure the compliance of publicly funded programs with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended in 1990 (handicap) regulations (nondiscrimination requirements in the provision of career and technical education programs) and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. Guidelines explain the civil rights responsibilities of recipients of federal financial assistance that offer or administer CTE programs.

Conducting these on-site reviews at secondary and postsecondary sites allows the Department to focus attention on the above issues. As a result of the visits, subrecipients reevaluate their policies and practices in these areas, increase their compliance with requirements set by the Office of Civil Rights, and improve access to educational benefits and services for all beneficiaries.

Disaggregating data by special populations category and by POS will allow the Department to examine data to ensure there is equal access provided to each special populations category by POS. The Needs Assessment used by the Local Recipients includes a chart that looks at race and special populations by program. The chart will allow recipients to identify possible areas of restricted access and substantiate the need to look at processes of recruitment.

The local application requires recipients to examine data by each special populations category. The reviewer asks them to establish areas of priority and to determine the strengths and improvement steps for each special populations category.

The Department also provides a special populations strand during the annual Integrated Learning Conference. Annually, the topics ensure equal access is covered and remains a focus.

1.

a.

- i. **Coordinate with the State Board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate.**

**The Department worked with L&I to develop the Combined WIOA state plan. Primary goals of Pennsylvania's Combined WIOA state plan is developing a comprehensive career pathways system in Pennsylvania and expanding career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential, degree attainment, with an emphasis on those with barriers to employment, to earn a family-sustaining wage and advance their career. The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) are supported by the Departments as they develop the career pathways.**

**The local Perkins recipients are required to work with the LWDBs. Secondary recipients include LWDB members on their school wide local advisory committees and on the individual Programs of Study advisory committees. Under Perkins V, the Perkins recipients also include LWDB representation on the stakeholders committee. Perkins postsecondary recipients partner with the LWDB on the One-Stop Centers, and the Department has LWDB representation on the state Perkins Stakeholders Committee.**

**The State Board for Career and Technical Education meets eight times a calendar year. Department staff request input from and provide reports to the Board as well as the board's CTE committee. The reports are provided during each Committee and Board meeting. Committee and Board members are actively engaged in the meetings and provide input into the direction the Department pursues.**

- ii. **Support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities.**

**The Department also administers competitive grant programs in which career and technical education providers can participate, in collaboration with other community partners, and which often benefit career and technical education students. One such initiative, the PAsmart Computer Science and STEM Advancing Grant, provides up to \$500,000 per award for regional, cross-sector, collective impact approaches to expanding computer science and STEM education following the national STEM Ecosystem model. Funded projects have included a postsecondary-secondary-industry partnership in which high school students earn computer science credentials by high school graduation, and a postsecondary-secondary-industry partnership in which rural students in a regional robotics network apply drone operations skills to needs in**

**agriculture. Another career readiness initiative is Teacher in the Workplace, which provides local education agencies with funding and technical assistance for educators to establish and maintain relationships with regional businesses, to engage in hands-on career experiences, and to modify their educational offerings to better prepare students for high-priority occupations. Outcomes of Teacher in the Workplace include more project-based learning relevant to career skills for pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade students, and students' increased awareness, especially at the elementary level, of available careers and the career applications of the core curriculum.**

All local applications address all aspects of an industry with each Perkins secondary and postsecondary recipient responding how they use Perkins funds to support all aspects of an industry. Activities include, but are not limited to, the following: purchasing equipment that is recommended by the Occupational Advisory Council (OAC) and is used in industry; job shadowing; field trips/site visits to businesses related to the POS; internships, externships, pre-apprenticeships and industry mentoring programs; and cooperative education.

Pennsylvania requires all secondary Programs of Study to provide students the opportunity to participate in work-based learning and to acquire experience in appropriate work situations related to their POS. When the traditional shop or laboratory cannot simulate the work situation, the classroom may be extended to a cooperating agency or business if the educational objectives are being met. Health occupations curriculum preparing individuals for direct patient care must provide clinical experience as an integral part of the curriculum.

Postsecondary recipients require internships, field placement, and service learning as part of their portion of the POS. Pennsylvania is supporting all aspects of an industry, which includes work-based learning opportunities for postsecondary students. Therefore, only programs that provide all aspects of an industry are eligible for Perkins funds.

The Department assists secondary schools and postsecondary institutions with developing and offering all aspects of an industry including work-based learning.

The Department is committed to providing regular updates on the implementation of its approved ESSA Consolidated State Plan and the Future Ready PA Index. The Industry-Based Learning Indicator – one of six College and Career Measures on the Future Ready PA Index – evaluates how students are engaging in work- and classroom-based activities by 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Effective the 2017-18 school year, all LEAs began reporting student level data for this indicator; prior to 2017-18, data was limited to CTE students.

The Department supports the implementation of all aspects of the industry by providing guidelines and promising practices to schools.

- The Department has guidelines to help educators connect to business and establish advisory committees for CTE program. Business partners can help educators on program improvement and curriculum content, and support CTE programs through work-based learning experiences. Advisory Committee Guidelines
- The Department developed guidelines for implementing work-based learning to assist administrators and cooperative education teacher-coordinators in complying with federal and state laws regarding Co-Op Guidelines ([pa.gov](http://pa.gov)). The guidelines address regulations and operational issues that should be followed to ensure an effective work-based learning environment for all students.



- The Department's Work-Based Learning Toolkit ([pa.gov](http://pa.gov)) provides teachers and school administrators with a basic understanding of the many types of experiential learning and how to implement those programs into their schools.

Other resources are found on the CTE Resources website that support local collaboration such as promising practices on engagement of business.

Forums such as the PDE Standards Aligned System (SAS) Institute highlight how education is connecting with employers and establishing career pathways that include work-based learning experiences. The SAS Institute has general and breakout sessions designed for postsecondary, secondary and business collaboration. The Department also uses state funds to support the development of business education platforms that connect students with employers. This includes speakers, work-based opportunities, and career exploration.

1.

a.

- i. **Improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V.)**  
**The Department will review the disaggregated data by Perkins recipient and by POS. This will allow the Department to identify POS areas that are successful and those that would benefit from Department resources. Targeted technical assistance will be designed and focused on improving the performance indicators and educational outcomes associated with special populations.**

The Department is providing the special populations subgroup data to each Perkins recipient. This will enable the recipients to evaluate their learners' performance on federal accountability measures and to review the data with their stakeholders. The Local Comprehensive Needs Assessment template will request information regarding special populations subgroup data. The recipients will identify the areas of strength and challenge. The recipients will identify action steps that will lead to improvement of student performance.

1. **Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V.)**

State regulation requires every approved secondary CTE program to articulate with a postsecondary CTE program. Each approved secondary CTE program demonstrates a planned process of curriculum development, instructional strategies and administrative procedures, which link educational agencies with other education agencies and with industries. The linkage helps students transition from a secondary school to postsecondary educational institution, or a registered apprenticeship without experiencing delays in or duplication of learning. During program evaluation and Perkins visits, the Department looks for seamless transition to ensure the maximum opportunity for student placement including opportunities for dual enrollment that promote acquisition of postsecondary credit while still in high school. Evidence includes articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements. Because this is part of Department regulations and is a measure under the ESSA Career Ready Indicators, the Department will continue to support dual enrollment opportunities under Perkins V.

When the postsecondary Perkins recipient submits a local application, it will identify which Program(s) of Study it offers and identify dual enrollment agreements associated with the Programs of Study. The compliance visits will examine each dual enrollment agreement and student transcripts.

Current monitoring process looks for dual enrollment opportunity. When dual enrollment does not exist, the Department recommends that the Perkins recipient pursue the development of dual enrollment agreements/programs. Resources have been developed by the Department that can assist secondary and postsecondary recipients to develop dual enrollment agreements. The Department will work with recipients to identify promising practices around dual enrollment and disseminate the promising practices. Currently, the Department has developed a Dual Credit Program Toolkit for PA School Entities that has been disseminated on establishing dual enrollment.

CTCs may become postsecondary private licensed schools in Pennsylvania. Once the CTC obtains approval through the State Board of Private Licensed Schools, the CTC may establish dual enrollment opportunities for the students enrolled in the secondary CTE programs. The Department will continue to support CTCs that seek private licensure and will engage other CTCs to seek private licensure in areas where postsecondary opportunities are limited or do not exist.

The Department will continue to encourage current dual enrollment activities. Perkins postsecondary will work on dual enrollment with regional Perkins secondary recipients.

The Department will allow Perkins secondary recipients in areas where Perkins postsecondary recipients do not exist to work with non-Perkins postsecondary recipients to establish dual enrollment agreements. During Department on-site visits, the Department will verify that local dual enrollment agreements exist.

The Department collects data on dual enrollment, which is an indicator that is displayed on the Future Ready PA Index. Dual enrollment credit falls under the Rigorous Courses of Study indicator and is applicable to all secondary education.

- 1. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V).**  
The Perkins V Statewide and Regional meetings held in 2019 engaged the required stakeholders. The participants provided input into the planning of the Perkins V 4-year state plan which also supports the planning and development of the CTE Programs of Study. The input received during the meetings has led to a revision of the statewide articulation agreement and method of developing the statewide Programs of Study. The State Plan process also provides opportunity for the stakeholders to provide public comment on the State Plan as well as the hearings.  
Continued engagement of the required stakeholders will occur in a number of ways. After the 4-year state plan has been implemented for a 2-year period, the stakeholders will be re-engaged to evaluate the plan and actions taken during the first 2 years of implementation.  
The local application guidelines ensure that at the local level each recipient engages the required stakeholders. The Department's review of the application as well as conducting on-site visits will ensure the required stakeholders are engaged in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the CTE Programs of Study.  
The Department engages secondary teachers, postsecondary faculty and administrators in the development and revisions of the CTE Programs of Study. During the revision process, the committee members evaluate the implementation of the POS and plan the next steps in the revision of the POS. Department staff participate in several conferences (academic counselor/career

guidance, CTE administrators, academic teachers, CTE teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, special education educators) to provide updates on the CTE Programs of Study and solicit their input in the planning, development and implementation. The input received during the update sessions leads to improved processes.

Department staff also participate on the Pennsylvania Apprenticeship Council and provide updates on the POS. The Council is comprised of labor union and business representatives. They are provided the opportunity to provide input into the planning, development and implementation of the POS.

2. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(v) of Perkins V.

See Appendix B for the Secondary Local Application template.

See Appendix C for the Postsecondary Local Application template.

3. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 3 for the requirements of the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V

See Appendix D.

4. Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.

**Size**

Size is based on the number of CTE Programs of Study available at the eligible recipient, not on enrollment in a specific CTE program. To be eligible for funding, a Perkins recipient must have at least three CTE Programs of Study in not fewer than three different career fields, each of which must serve a minimum of eight students. An eligible recipient also must have laboratories and classrooms that are readily accessible to all students, as well as a non-discriminatory admissions policy that is board approved and implemented.

**Scope**

The scope of a CTE Program of Study is defined as a curriculum that covers all aspects of the industry and meets the criteria listed in the POS definition of Perkins V, including:

1. One secondary technical course per year is offered (definition of a course is 240 technical instructional hours);
2. Postsecondary programs will not have less than 50 percent occupational credit hours;
3. Secondary and postsecondary academic and technical content are aligned, leading to a sequence of courses that lead to nonduplicative course content offering;
4. Work-based learning opportunities are available to students; and
5. A credit articulation agreement exists between the secondary CTE Program of Study, and the corresponding postsecondary portion of the CTE Program of Study. A transcript review fee is acceptable, but a charge for the credits is not acceptable. When a statewide or local articulation agreement is not an option (i.e., due to restrictions set by a third party accreditor or lack of a secondary CIP), postsecondary institution(s) will engage

secondary institution(s) in early postsecondary opportunities that prepare students to enroll in entry-level postsecondary coursework in their chosen major.

## Quality

Quality of secondary programs of study is based on the state regulations for approved programs. See Title 22 Education, Chapters 4 and 339.

Quality is determined by examining the postsecondary database maintained by the Department for the 2021-2022 program year. Programs listed in the database have been approved by the institutions' Board of Trustees, accrediting authorities (national, regional or program specific accrediting authorities, and PDE/State Board for Career and Technical Education).

Perkins postsecondary then will begin to enter program information in the electronic approval system and provide information on each program that Perkins V funds will support. This includes information on:

Labor Market Need, Summary of Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Program Content and Industry Standards, Student to Instructor Ratio, Equipment and Supplies, Safety Practices, Performance Indicators, Certifications Available to Students, Instructor Credentials.

3. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations
  1. **Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations:**
    1. **Will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act.**
    2. **Will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population.**
    3. **Will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113 and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations.**
    4. **Will be provided with appropriate accommodations.**
    5. **Will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V.**

Department regulations require Perkins recipients to have nondiscriminatory admissions policies that state whether enrollment is unlimited or limited. If enrollment is limited, an admissions policy must include nondiscriminatory eligibility requirements for the purpose of predicting a student's success in each program. When the number of students predicted to be successful in each program is less than the number of openings available in that given program, the openings may be available to adults or students at another school district. When the number of students predicted to be successful in each program exceeds the number of openings available, the admissions policy must include a nondiscriminatory selection procedure, as required by current federal and state statutes, regulations, and guidelines. During compliance and technical assistance visits, Department staff verify admissions policies exist.

Additionally, if a selection procedure is necessary to select and reject qualified applicants, as judged by established and publicized eligibility requirements, the procedure shall be nondiscriminatory under the federal and state statutes and regulations and guidelines.

Recipients must develop a recruitment program and the program must include announcements concerning CTE and must exemplify freedom from occupational stereotypes and to the extent possible the philosophy of equal access.

The Department also requires guidance personnel to provide students the information necessary to make informed decisions regarding the selection of appropriate occupational programs and discuss the importance of high school academic achievement and postsecondary education and training to career success.

The Department visits recipients to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. The regulations outline the expected standards of development, admission, and operation of quality career and technical education programs. The qualitative review ensures the Perkins recipients have designed the CTE programs to enable the special populations categories to enroll without discrimination and to prepare for further education and training in occupations that are aligned to Pennsylvania industry sectors.

The Department's strategies also ensure technical assistance activities and professional development are inclusive of special populations and equity. These activities have been outlined in an earlier section.

The Department's review of Perkins recipients includes the on-site evaluation to determine that the admissions policy is nondiscriminatory. The Department also conducts Civil Rights reviews. The Department works with the U.S. Office for Civil Rights and has developed a review process that measures the compliance of the publicly funded programs with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 amended in 1990 regulations and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. The guidelines explain the civil rights responsibilities of recipients of federal financial assistance that offer or administer CTE programs. The Civil Rights on-site reviews focus on the identified Department regulations require approved secondary CTE programs to provide services and accommodations to disadvantaged, disabled or limited English-speaking students enrolled in CTE programs. The district of residence is required to provide services and accommodations in accordance with applicable law, service agreements and student IEPs. The Department examines specific evidence during on-site reviews and program evaluations, which includes student IEPs and service agreements.

Members of special populations are provided equal access to CTE Programs of Study (POS) and to the services available at the secondary schools and institutions of higher education. Each Perkins recipient has demonstrated that the POS they offer is preparing students for high-skill, high-wage or in-demand industry sectors or occupations. Department staff verify the alignment during the review of the applications as well as during on-site reviews. Annually, data will be provided to the Perkins recipients. They will review the data and ensure individuals in each special populations category are meeting or exceeding the SDLPs. If the individuals are not meeting SDLP the Perkins recipient identifies actions, it will take in the local application to improve performance of individuals who are members of special populations. The Department will review the actions, which could be the development or implementation of programs designed specifically for a category of special populations. If the actions appear to address the needs of the individuals, the local application will be approved. On-site monitoring of the Perkins recipient will ensure the approved program/actions are implanted and individuals are making meaningful progress. The recipients' annual performance report requires the recipient to explain how the SDLP was or was not met and what further actions will be taken to continue to demonstrate meaningful progress.

Additionally, the Department requires entities with approved secondary CTE programs to provide students adequate supports to meet academic standards as determined by Title 22, Chapter 4 Academic Standards and Assessments and, when applicable, consistent with the student's IEP, and that instruction in these academic areas at all school entities where the

student is enrolled is appropriate to the chosen area of occupational training. Evidence that the Department examines during on-site reviews and approved program evaluations includes transcripts, course sequences, student IEPs, support plans, and operating agreements.

The Department will require the same expectations for any postsecondary recipient applying for a Perkins V grant. The postsecondary recipient must provide evidence that appropriate services and accommodations are available and provided to each special populations category.

Integrated setting means work in a job where the person with a disability is more likely to engage with the co-workers who are not disabled. This contrasts to a job where most co-workers are persons with a disability as traditionally found in sheltered employment settings or federal/state 'set-aside' contracts for agencies that use and hire individuals with disability to perform the work. On-site monitoring will ensure the Perkins recipients include work-based learning for students and that students are in an integrated setting. The Department's approved program evaluation and approval/reapproval at the secondary level requires approved programs to provide work-based learning, which is learning associated with the CTE POS and is in an integrated setting. The approved program evaluation and Perkins on-site monitoring visits will ensure students with disability are engaged in integrated employment.

#### 4. Preparing Teachers and Faculty

**Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V).**

The Department has developed and implemented CTE teacher and administrator certification programs through contractual agreements with three state universities: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania State University, and Temple University. Each university operates a Professional Personnel Development Center to focus on the CTE teacher and administrator certifications. The Centers provide pre-service and in-service professional personnel development services for career and technical educators in the respective regions of the commonwealth. Each university ensures the certification programs are based on research and cover topics including curriculum development, integration, instructional practices, students with disabilities, English learners, parental and community involvement, Department initiatives, and current trends in education.

All teachers and administrators must hold either an instructional or career and technical instructional certification to be employed in a Pennsylvania secondary school entity. State standards exist for teacher preparation programs and the programs must align to state standards and ensure the certification programs meet state regulations. The three Professional Personnel Development Centers prepare CTE teachers and administrators and recommend them to the Department for career and technical instructional certifications.

In all three regions of the state, Center staff hold regular meetings to share notes from the field and discuss topics of interest to the school. Also, professional development experiences are developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment with input from the following sources:

1. Advisory groups made up of volunteers from the group for which the experience is intended.
2. Evaluative data collected from previous participants in similar activities.

Professional development activities include:

1. Opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills related to the instructors' occupational area so they can provide dynamic, cutting-edge CTE instruction.
2. Addressing the needs of special populations students.
3. Discussions related to educational delivery methods and instructional techniques.
4. Resources and current information on PDE BCTE initiatives.
5. Collaborations and networking opportunities with other education professionals.

In addition, career and technical educators are provided with technical training on how to access, select, develop, and implement curricula materials that support statewide programs of study and rigorous challenging programs; career pathways; scope and sequence of courses, in accordance with Chapter 339; industry standards; articulation agreements; and other state and federal mandates.

The professional development activities are designed to enhance the knowledge, academic integration proficiency, and skills or capabilities of career and technical instructors. For example, the following objectives are important in determining professional development programming:

1. Engage the teacher-learner, rather than rely on PowerPoint presentations.
2. When possible, conduct on-going group activities, rather than stand-alone workshops.
3. Create events that meet the needs of all teachers, including incumbents.
4. Promote teacher involvement in Domain 4 (Professional Responsibilities) of the PA Framework for Effective Educators.
5. Complement, but not duplicate, PDE BCTE initiatives and objectives of the Technical Assistance Program or the Integrated Learning Conference.

The Department continues its partnership with PACTA. The partnership includes the Department's support and input into professional development that leads to viable professional development and technical assistance for instructors and administrators in CTE settings. PACTA representatives also serve on the BCTE's strategic planning committee and assist in identifying action steps for the BCTE, with PACTA's assistance, can take to improve student academic and technical achievement, increase business engagement, develop K-12 pathways, serve special populations students, address academic and technical proficiency, and expand career development.

The Department's BCTE conducts the annual Integrated Learning Conference: The School to Career Connection. This conference highlights academic and technical integration strategies. The conference is designed to share successful strategies that encourage the implementation of educational initiatives that enhance learning opportunities for all students. Over 75 concurrent sessions, three pre-conference workshops, and a variety of meetings and professional development activities are scheduled during the conference.

More than 500 participants attend the conference including instructors, administrators, counselors, postsecondary partners, and exhibitors. Presenters cover instructional strategies and showcase promising practices of career and technical education programs that improve the academic and technical skills of students through the integration of academics with career and technical education.

The Technical Assistance Program provides sustained professional development to postsecondary and secondary recipients. The sessions are inclusive of paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators and postsecondary faculty.

[1]Development of Pennsylvania POS Framework

[2]Pennsylvania Program of Study Competency Task Grids

[3] Program Approval – Section 339.4 (22 Pa. Code § 339.4)

[4]POS Articulation

[5]Counselor Resources

## **Appendix B**

### **Perkins Secondary Local Application**

#### **Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment**

This section will have three parts of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to rollover into the local application. The elements in this section are view only, only after approved.

1. Stakeholders Section-List of participants. (Table with dropdown column)
2. Size, Scope and Quality Section-Table indicating in process or compliant. (Table/Questions)
3. Equity and Access Section- The progress that has been made toward implementation of equal access to high quality CTE programs of study for all students. (Table/Questions)

#### **Standard Narrative**

1. Describe the results of the comprehensive needs assessment. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Provide a list of the career and technical education program offerings and activities that the eligible recipient will provide with Perkins V funds, which is informed by the results of the comprehensive needs assessment (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Describe how the results of the comprehensive needs assessment informed the selection of the specific career and technical education programs and activities to be funded. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. new programs of study that will be developed and submitted to the State for approval. (Text Box 3300 characters)
2. Describe how students, including students who are members of special populations, will learn about career and technical education course offerings and whether each course is part of a career and technical education program of study. Describe how the eligible recipient, in collaboration with local workforce development boards and other local workforce agencies, one-stop delivery systems, and other partners, will provide each of the following: (Label)
  - a. Career exploration and career development coursework, activities, or services. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - b. Career information on employment opportunities that incorporate the most up-to-date information on high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, as determined by the comprehensive needs assessment. (Text Box 3300 characters)



- c. An organized system of career guidance and academic counseling to students before enrolling and while participating in a CTE program. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 1. Describe how the eligible recipient will improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in CTE programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical education components of such programs through the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant CTE programs to ensure learning in the subjects that constitute a well-rounded education. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 1. Describe how the eligible recipient will meet the following requirements: (Label)
  - a. Provide activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - b. Prepare CTE participants for non-traditional fields. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - c. Provide equal access for special populations to CTE courses, programs, and programs of study. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - d. Ensure that members of special populations will not be discriminated against based on their status as members of special populations. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 1. Describe the work-based learning opportunities the eligible recipient will provide to students participating in CTE programs and how the recipient will work with representatives from employers to develop or expand work-based learning opportunities for CTE students. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 1. Describe how the eligible recipient will provide students participating in CTE programs with the opportunity to gain postsecondary credit while still attending high school, such as through dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high school. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 1. Describe how the eligible recipient will coordinate with the Pennsylvania and institutions of higher education to support the recruitment, preparation, retention, and training, including professional development, of teachers, faculty, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals who meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements (including any requirements met through alternative routes to certification), including individuals from groups underrepresented in the teaching profession. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 1. Describe how the eligible recipient will address disparities or gaps in performance, as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II), in each of the plan years. If no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, describe the additional actions that will be taken to eliminate those disparities or gaps. (Text Box 3300 characters)
- 2. Describe how the eligible recipient will use funds to develop and implement evaluations of the activities carried out with Perkins V funds, including evaluations necessary to complete the comprehensive needs assessment and the local report. (Text Box 3300 characters)

#### **Local Negotiation**

Pennsylvania is conducting negotiations with local eligible recipients on levels of performance for the secondary core indicators. The negotiations will be based on State-determined baseline data provided by PDE. (Table)

Click link below to view the “Expected Consortium Performance.”

Secondary Performance Level

Indicator s	1S1 Four- Year Graduation Rate	1S2 Extended Graduation Rate	2S1 Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	2S2 Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	2S3 Academic Proficiency in Science	3S1 Post- Program Placement	4S1 Non- Traditional Program Concentration	5S1 Program Quality- Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential	5S2 Technical Skill Attainment
<b>State Baseline</b>									
<b>Consortium Baseline</b>									
<b>Year 1</b>									
<b>Year 2</b>									

### Requirements for Uses of Funds

Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to develop, coordinate, implement, or improve CTE programs to meet the needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective. (Label)

This section **does not have to equal total allocation**. Indicate dollar amount and funding source for all six (6) Required Use of Funds. Each funding source **must** be a separate line item. The list provided is the short version of the six (6) Required Uses of Funds as they appear in the dropdown box. A detailed description of all six “Required Uses of Funds” is available in the Perkins V guidelines. (Label)

Identify all funding sources that address any of the six (6) Required Uses of Funds in Perkins V, per Section 135(b).

### Required Uses of Funds:

1. Career exploration and career development
2. Professional development
3. High-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations
4. Integration of academic skills
5. Programs that result in increasing student achievement of the local performance levels
6. Evaluation necessary to complete the comprehensive needs assessment and the local report

Required Uses of Funds (dropdown)	Percentage of Perkins Funding (1-100)	Funding Source(s)	Amount (numeric)
Select from dropdown list	Numeric (1-100)	Text	Numeric (1-10000)

### Action Plan

Select from the dropdown box in the first column the “Performance Indicator” that is not meeting the State baseline. Select all that apply (one at a time). **Note:** Remember when completing the **Activity Table** to click the “Add” button on the right when each row is complete. At least one activity must be created for each objective. (Label)

Objectives/Select from Dropdown.

1. 1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate
2. 1S2: Extended Graduation Rate
3. 2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts
4. 2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics
5. 2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science
6. 3S1: Post-Program Placement
7. 4S1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration
8. 5S1: Program Quality – Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential
9. 5S2: Skill Attainment

### Activity Table

Objective (dropdown with performance indicators)	Activity (text or numeric)	Location/Site (text)	Funds Amount (numeric/dollar amount) formula	Timeline (numeric/date)
			<b>Total Amount:</b>	
			<b>Grant Total:</b>	

### Risk Assessment

The State must conduct a risk assessment during the pre-award process to evaluate an applicant’s ability to execute the program for which they are applying , and may assign specific additional conditions within the grant award to develop the applicant’s ability to deliver and/or administer the grant program Risk factors that will be consider include, but are not limited to, the following: previous non-compliance; any major issues; correction of previous findings; new

personnel; substantial system changes (e.g., grant accounting system); new grant recipient; and results of any federal monitoring with specific conditions required. (Label)

Risk Assessment is a process to identify potential problems that could lead to risks in the accountability, fiscal accounting, and grant operation. (Label)

The following questions will assist with the evaluation of the applicant's risk level for the future pre-award process. (Label)

1. **(Select No/Yes)**
2. If so, provide contact information for Director/ Superintendent. (Text Box 300 characters)
3. Is there a new Business/Fiscal Manager in the past three-years? (Select No/Yes)
4. If so, provide contact information for Business/Fiscal Manager. (Text Box 300 characters)
5. Is there a new Perkins Administrator in the past three-years? (Select No/Yes)
6. If so, provide contact information for Perkins Administrator. Indicate number months or years as a Perkins Administrator in Pennsylvania. (Text Box 400 characters)
7. Were there any Perkins' corrective actions in 2019-2020 fiscal year? (Select No/Yes)
8. If so, describe how all corrections identified in previous Perkins On-Site Compliance Reports have been completely satisfied and fully implemented. If they have not been corrected, provide a detailed explanation. If you have not received an on-site visit within the last two years, enter N/A. (Text Box 1000 characters)
9. Were there any Single Audit findings in 2019-2020? (Select No/Yes)
10. If so, have the findings and corrective actions been corrected? If not, identify the finding and provide a detailed explanation as to why it has not been corrected. (Text Box 1000 characters)

**Budget Detail**

Same as previous years

Will include 9 sections:

1. Salaries
2. Benefits
3. Purchased Professional and Technical Services
4. Purchased Property Services
5. Other Purchased Services
6. Supplies
7. Equipment
8. Indirect Cost
9. Budget Summary (view only)

Appendix C

**Perkins Postsecondary Local Application**

## Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

This section will have three parts of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to rollover into Local Application. The elements in this section are view only, only after approved.

1. Stakeholders Section – List of participants. (Table with dropdown column)
2. Size, Scope and Quality Section – Table indicating in process or compliant. (Table/Questions)
3. Equity and Access Section – The progress that has been made toward implementation of equal access to high quality CTE programs of study for all students. (Table/Questions)

### Standard Narrative

1. Describe the results of the comprehensive needs assessment. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Provide a list of the career and technical education program offerings and activities that the eligible recipient will provide with Perkins V funds, which is informed by the results of the comprehensive needs assessment (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Describe how the results of the comprehensive needs assessment informed the selection of the specific career and technical education programs and activities to be funded. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Describe new programs of study that will be developed and submitted to the State for approval. (Text Box 3300 characters)
2. Describe how students, including students who are members of special populations, will learn about career and technical education course offerings and whether each course is part of a career and technical education program of study. Describe how the eligible recipient, in collaboration with local workforce development boards and other local workforce agencies, one-stop delivery systems, and other partners, will provide each of the following: (Label)
  - a. Career exploration and career development coursework, activities, or services. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - b. Career information on employment opportunities that incorporate the most up-to-date information on high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, as determined by the comprehensive needs assessment. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - c. An organized system of career guidance and academic counseling to students before enrolling and while participating in a CTE program. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Describe how the eligible recipient will improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in CTE programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical education components of such programs through the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant CTE programs to ensure learning in the subjects that constitute a well-rounded education. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Describe how the eligible recipient will meet the following requirements: (Label)
  - a. Provide activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency. (Text Box 3300 characters)

- b. Prepare CTE participants for non-traditional fields. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - c. Provide equal access for special populations to CTE courses, programs, and programs of study. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  - d. Ensure that members of special populations will not be discriminated against based on their status as members of special populations. (Text Box 3300 characters)
1. Describe the work-based learning opportunities the eligible recipient will provide to students participating in CTE programs and how the recipient will work with representatives from employers to develop or expand work-based learning opportunities for CTE students. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  1. Describe how will provide students participating in CTE programs with the opportunity to gain postsecondary credit while still attending high school, such as through dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high school. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  1. Describe how the eligible recipient will coordinate with the Pennsylvania and institutions of higher education to support the recruitment, preparation, retention, and training, including professional development, of teachers, faculty, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals who meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements (including any requirements met through alternative routes to certification), including individuals from groups underrepresented in the teaching profession. (Text Box 3300 characters)
  1. Describe how the eligible recipient will address disparities or gaps in performance, as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II), in each of the plan years. If no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, describe the additional actions that will be taken to eliminate those disparities or gaps. (Text Box 3300 characters)

Indicators	1P1 Post-Program Placement	2P1 Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	3P1 Non-Traditional Program Concentration
<b>State Baseline</b>			
<b>Consortium Baseline</b>			
<b>Year 1</b>			
<b>Year 2</b>			

### Requirements for Uses of Funds

Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to develop, coordinate, implement, or improve CTE programs to meet the needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective. (Label)

This section **does not have to equal total allocation**. Indicate dollar amount and funding source for all six (6) Required Use of Funds. Each funding source **must** be a separate line item. The list provided is the short version of the six (6) Required Uses of Funds as they appear in the dropdown box. A detailed description of all six “Required Uses of Funds” is available in the Perkins V guidelines. (Label)

Identify all funding sources that address any of the six (6) Required Uses of Funds in Perkins V, per Section 135(b).

#### Required Uses of Funds:

1. Career exploration and career development
2. Professional development
3. High-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations
4. Integration of academic skills
5. Programs that result in increasing student achievement of the local performance levels
6. Evaluation necessary to complete the comprehensive needs assessment and the local report

Required Uses of Funds (dropdown)	Percentage of Perkins Funding (1-100)	Funding Source(s)	Amount (numeric)
Select from dropdown list	Numeric (1-100)	Text	Numeric (1-10000)

#### Action Plan

Select from the dropdown box in the first column the “Performance Indicator” that is not meeting the State baseline. Select all that apply (one at a time). **Note:** Remember when completing the **Activity Table** to click the “Add” button on the right when each row is complete. At least one activity must be created for each objective. (Label)

Objectives/Select from Dropdown.

#### Postsecondary Performance Indicators (Dropdown):

1. 1P1: Post-Program Placement
2. 2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential
3. 3P1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration

#### Activity Table

Objective (dropdown with performance indicators)	Activity (text or numeric)	Location/Site (text)	Funds Amount (numeric/dollar amount) formula	Timeline (numeric/date)
			<b>Total Amount:</b>	

Objective (dropdown with performance indicators)	Activity (text or numeric)	Location/Site (text)	Funds Amount (numeric/dollar amount) formula	Timeline (numeric/date)
			<b>Grant Total:</b>	

## Risk Assessment

The State must conduct a risk assessment during the pre-award process to evaluate an applicant's ability to execute the program for which they are applying, and may assign specific additional conditions within the grant award to develop the applicant's ability to deliver and/or administer the grant program. Risk factors that will be considered include, but are not limited to, the following: previous non-compliance; any major issues; correction of previous findings; new personnel; substantial system changes (e.g., grant accounting system); new grant recipient; and results of any federal monitoring with specific conditions required. (Label)

Risk Assessment is a process to identify potential problems that could lead to risks in the accountability, fiscal accounting, and grant operation. (Label)

The following questions will assist with the evaluation of the applicant's risk level for the future pre-award process (Label):

1. ? (Select No/Yes)
2. If so, provide contact information for President. (Text Box 300 characters)
3. Is there a new Business/Fiscal Manager in the past three-years (Select No/Yes)
4. If so, provide contact information for Business/Fiscal Manager. (Text Box 300 characters)
5. Is there a new Perkins Administrator in the past three-years? (Select No/Yes)
6. If so, provide contact information for Perkins Administrator. Indicate number months or years as a Perkins Administrator in Pennsylvania. (Text Box 400 characters)
7. Were there any Perkins' corrective actions in 2019-2020 fiscal year? (Select No/Yes)
8. If so, describe how all corrections identified in previous Perkins On-Site Compliance Reports have been completely satisfied and fully implemented. If they have not been corrected, provide a detailed explanation. If you have not received an on-site visit within the last two years, enter N/A. (Text Box 1000 characters)
9. Were there any Single Audit findings in 2019-2020? (Select No/Yes)
10. If so, have the findings and corrective actions been corrected? If not, identify the finding and provide a detailed explanation as to why it has not been corrected. (Text Box 1000 characters)

### Program Approval

Postsecondary recipients will enter program information in the electronic approval system (CATs-Career and Technical Education Information System) and provide information on each program that Perkins V funds will support. Each postsecondary program will be approved by the 2021-2022 program year.

If you have an approved program in CATs, please upload the sign assurance sheet below. (Label with upload document)

### WIOA



Each federal Perkins postsecondary recipient will address the mandated support of the One-Stop Center infrastructure costs in their Local Plan application. Each recipient that uses federal Perkins funds for administrative purposes (indirect costs) must engage in local discussion with all Local Workforce Development Board within the region. (Label question)

1. Describe how the Perkins postsecondary institution works with the Workforce Development Board to support the One-Stop Center. (Maximum length is 1500 characters)
2. Describe the calculation used to determine proportionate use and benefit of a One-Stop Center. (Maximum length is 1500 characters)
3. Describe how the postsecondary institution supports infrastructure cost to the One-Stop Center. Note: The amount of administrative funds (indirect cost) used to support One-Stop Center infrastructure may not exceed the WIOA mandated 1.5% maximum. (Maximum length is 1500 characters)
4. What infrastructure costs are supported at the One-Stop Center using the federal Perkins administrative funds (indirect costs)? (Maximum length is 1500 characters)
5. Provide the details of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the One-Stop Center. A copy must be on file with postsecondary eligible recipient. (Maximum length is 1500 characters)
6. Check the box to confirm the Perkins Postsecondary President/Chief Executive Officer assures that the Perkins postsecondary recipient will comply with WIOA.

**Budget Detail**

Same as previous years

Will include 9 sections:

1. Salaries
  2. Benefits
  3. Purchased Professional and Technical Services
  4. Purchased Property Services
  5. Other Purchased Services
  6. Supplies
  7. Equipment
  8. Indirect Cost
- Budget Summary (view only)

## **Appendix D**

### **Perkins V Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

**The Pennsylvania Department of Education has provided information on the new Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) requirement in Perkins V. The first workshop, December 13, 2018, highlighted that federal funds must be used to reduce performance gaps associated with each performance indicator. To assist with the analysis of the performance gaps, states are required to provide data by special**

**populations categories for recipients to use with the stakeholders. The recipients are to conduct a local comprehensive needs assessment using the data. This new requirement closely aligns the with ESSA and WIOA. During the March 2019, Perkins Regional Workshops, a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment template was discussed along with the purpose of the CLNA.**

**The CLNA template has been developed and provides guiding questions and tables for each eligible agency to utilize at the required Stakeholders Meeting. The information gathered (similar to this document) will be entered in the eGrants system mid-January 2020.**

### **What is a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and why is it so important?**

A “**need**” is a discrepancy or gap between “what is” and “what should be.”

A **Needs Assessment** is a systematic set of procedures that are used to determine needs, examine their nature and causes, and set priorities for future action. They are conducted to determine the needs of people – i.e., receivers of the services provided by an organization. In education, the receivers of the services are students and their parents.

A **Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment** takes into account needs identified in other parts of a system. In education, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment determines the needs of those who receive the academic service (students), the providers of the academic services (school staff), and the structure and system of the organization (academic programs, assessment and evaluation, resources).

A Comprehensive Needs Assessment consists of the following steps:

1. **Identify Planning Team (stakeholders).**
2. **Identify data sources (stakeholders engage in a review of focused data).**
3. **Analyze the data.**
4. **Identify areas of growth and strength (what is working).**
5. **Identify areas of need (what is not working).**
6. **Prioritize needs.**

### **How often must the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment be complete?**

The Local Needs Assessment must be completed on a biennial basis with a review of progress during the odd year. The assessment (or review) must be completed prior to the completion of the grant application and must be uploaded each year in the Related Documents area of the grant application before grants can be approved.

#### **1. Local Discussion (Subgroup Data Provided) Prompts:**

1. What data are trending positively over the last several years? Your strengths and improvement.
2. What data are stagnated or trending negatively? Your challenges.
3. Based on the performance indicators and student population data, what are our highest priority areas of focus? List in the table below.

Local CTE Program Summary Strengths/Improvements:

Challenges:

Proposed Strategies:

2. Describe progress that has been made toward implementation of equal access to high quality CTE programs of study for all students. [Perkins V Sec. 134 (c)(2)(E)] **Help: Individual student groups counts by CIP. The low counts prevent PDE from sharing this data.**

Question: What are doing to ensure equal access?

Program CIP
Totals
Male
Female
Disabled
Economically Disadvantage
<u>Non-Trad</u>
Single Parent
Out of Work Individuals
English Learner
Homeless
Foster Care
Military Family

1. What strategies are helping students overcome barriers to learning that result in lower rates of access to, or performance gaps in, the programs for special populations?

2. What programs are designed to enable special populations to meet the local levels of performance?

3. What activities prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in competitive, integrated settings\* that will lead to self-sufficiency?

\*A setting that enables individuals with disabilities to interact with non-disabled persons to the fullest extent possible.

4. What activities will be implemented to ensure programs receiving Perkins funds will close the achievement gap?

35. Describe how the CTE programs offered in our CTCs/School Districts/Postsecondary Institutions are of sufficient in size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students. [Perkins V Sec. 134 (c)(2)(B)(i)]

SIZE Definition: Size is based on the number of programs of study available at the Perkins institution, not on enrollment in a specific CTE program. To be eligible for funding, a Perkins recipient must have at least three programs of study in not fewer than 3 different fields, each of which must serve a minimum of eight students. An eligible school also must have laboratories and classrooms that are readily accessible to all students, as well as a non-discriminatory admissions policy that is board approved and implemented.
SCOPE Definition: The scope of a program is defined as a curriculum that covers all aspects of the industry and meets the criteria listed in the POS definition of Perkins V, including:
(a) One secondary technical course per year is offered (definition of a courses is 240 technical instructional hours);
(b) At minimum, 50% of the postsecondary credit meets the definition of career and technical education:
(c) Secondary and postsecondary academic and technical content are aligned, leading to a sequence of courses that lead to a nonduplicative program offering;
(d) Is inclusive of work-based learning; and
(e) A credit transfer articulation agreement exists between the secondary CTE program and the corresponding postsecondary CTE program.
QUALITY Definition: Quality of secondary programs of study is based on the state regulations for approved programs. See Title 22 Education, Chapters 4 and 339. During the transition year, PDE will work with stakeholders to define high-quality postsecondary programs of study and to identify an approval process aligned to that definition.
Postsecondary quality will be defined by:
Review the postsecondary database where current approved postsecondary programs are listed. Programs listed in the database demonstrates that the programs have been approved by the institutions Board of Trustees, accrediting authorities (national, regional or program specific [NAECP] accrediting authorities), and Pennsylvania Department of Education/State Board for Vocational Education.

Local Discussion Prompts:

1.How well are we meeting the state’s Size, Scope and Quality definitions?

2.In what ways can we improve?

**Help: Capture workforce, salaries and where the jobs are locally. Use the GIS, OAC members and local business (Stakeholders’ group) to assist with gathering the data for this table. PDE will not provide this data.**

1. Aligned to State, regional or local in-demand industry sectors or occupations identified by the state workforce development board or local workforce development board, including career pathways.

2. Designed to meet local education or economic needs not identified by state boards or local workforce development boards.

CTE Program Name	# of Enrolled (Most recent year)	High Wage/In-Demand Occupations (Local/Regional)	# of Openings (Over last years)	High Wage/In-Demand Occupations (State)	# of Openings (Most recent period)

5. Evaluate progress toward the implementation of CTE programs and programs of study: [Perkins V Sec. 134 (c)(2)(C)] **Help: In this table “Year 1” would be 2017-2018 fiscal year, “Year 2” 2018-2019, so on. Once table has been completed determine need with your Stakeholders’ Committee.**

Enrollment Trend	Concentrator Enrollment	# Earning Dual Credits	Number of Certification/Credentials Earned						
CTE Program Name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Trend	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Trend	Year 1

Local CTE Program Summary Strengths/Improvement:

Challenges:

Proposed Strategies:

6. Describe progress being made to improve recruitment, retention, and training of CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and career guidance and academic counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in these professions. [Perkins V Sec. 134 (c)(2)(D)] **Help: Identify the diversity in the staff for the past three years. PDE will not provide this data.**

Individuals in groups underrepresented	Number Working in Local CTE Program(s)	# Professional Development Workshops Offered						
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Trend	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Trend
CTE teachers								
Other Faculty								
Instructional Support								
Paraprofessionals								
Counselors								
Others								

1. Local CTE Staff Summary of Recruitment Efforts:

1. Local CTE Staff Summary of Retention Efforts:

1. Professional Development Offered/Participated:

Title	Type (Workshop, Conference, Other)	Who Attended

### Brainstorm Form of Required Stakeholders for Local Comprehensive Needs Assessment Discussions [Perkins V Sec. 134(d)]

In conducting the comprehensive needs assessment and developing the local application, the eligible recipient must involve a diverse body of stakeholders, including, at a minimum (the following):

	Name	Organization/Title	Email/Contact Information
(1) Representatives of career and technical education programs in a local educational agency or educational service agency, including teachers, career	Teachers		

	Name	Organization/Title	Email/Contact Information
guidance and academic counselors, principals and other school leaders, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals			
Counselors			
Principals/Admin			
Support Personnel			
Paraprofessionals			
(2) Representatives of career and technical education programs at postsecondary educational institutions, including faculty and administrators	Postsecondary Faculty		
Postsecondary Admin			
(3) Representatives of the state board or local workforce development boards and a range of local or regional businesses or industries	Workforce Board Reps		
Employers (Local)			
Employers (Regional)			
(4) Parents and students	Parents		
Students			
(5) Representatives of special populations	Special Pop Reps		
6) Representatives of regional or local agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth (as defined in section 1432 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965)	Out of School Youth Reps		

	Name	Organization/Title	Email/Contact Information
Homeless Youth Rep			
At-Risk Youth Rep			
(7) Representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in the State, where applicable; and			
Others (Optional)			

## Resources

### Perkins V Special Populations Definition [Perkins V Sec. 3(48)]

Perkins V defines “special populations” as:

- (A) individuals with disabilities;
- (B) individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults;
- (C) individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;
- (D) single parents, including single pregnant women;
- (E) out-of-workforce individuals;
- (F) English learners;
- (G) homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);
- (H) youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system; and
- (I) youth with a parent who—
  - a. is a member of the armed forces (as such term is defined in section 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code); and
  - b. is on active duty (as such term is defined in section 101(d)(1) of such title.

### Perkins V Core Indicators of Performance [Perkins V Sec. 113(b)]

#### Secondary Performance Indicators

#### 1S1 – Four-Year Graduation Cohort Rate



Section 113 (b)(2)(A)(i)(I) The percentage of CTE concentrators who graduate high school, as measured by the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965).

**Numerator:**

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who, in the reporting year, were included in the State's computation of its graduation rate as defined in the State's Consolidated Accountability Plan pursuant to Section 1111(b)(2) of the ESSA.

**1S2 - Extended-Year Graduation Rate**

Section 113 (b)(2)(A)(i)(II) (At the State's discretion) The percentage of CTE concentrators who graduate high school, as measured by extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defined in such section 8101.

**Numerator:** The number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school, as measured by the extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965).

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who, in the reporting year, were included in the State's computation of its extended-year cohort graduation rate as defined in the State's Consolidated Accountability Plan pursuant to Section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.

**2S1 - Academic Proficiency in Reading/Language Arts**

Section 113 (2)(A)(ii) CTE concentrator proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments in reading/language arts as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who achieved reading/language arts proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act; and whose scores were included in the computation of the State's secondary education Academic Achievement indicator.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who took the ESEA assessments in reading/language arts whose scores were included in the State's computation of AYP.

**2S2 - Academic Proficiency in Mathematics**

Section 113 (2)(A)(ii) CTE concentrator proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments in mathematics as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who achieved mathematics proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act; and whose scores were included in the computation of the State's secondary education Academic Achievement indicator.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who took the ESEA assessments in mathematics whose scores were included in the State's computation of AYP.

**2S3 - Academic Proficiency in Science**

Section 113 (2)(A)(ii) CTE concentrator proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments in science as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who achieved science proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act; and whose scores were included in the computation of the State's secondary education Academic Achievement indicator.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who took the ESEA assessments in science whose scores were included in the State's computation of AYP.

### **3S1 Post-Program Placement**

Section 113 (b)(2)(A)(iii) The percentage of CTE concentrators who, in the second quarter after exiting from secondary education, are in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service or a service program that receives assistance under Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are employed.

**Numerator:** The number of CTE concentrators who, in the second quarter after exiting from secondary education, are in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service or a service program that receives assistance under Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)) or are employed.

**Denominator:** The number of CTE concentrators who left secondary education during the reporting year.

### **4S1 Nontraditional Program Concentrators**

Section 113 (a)(2)(A)(v) The percentage of CTE concentrators in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators, from underrepresented gender groups, in career and technical education programs and programs of study, that lead to non-traditional fields.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators in a CTE program or program of study that leads to a nontraditional field, during the reporting year.

### **5S1 – Recognized Postsecondary Credential**

Section 113 (b)(2)(A)(iv)(I)(aa) The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school.

### **5S4 - Technical Skill Attainment**

Section 113 (b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) The percentage of CTE concentrators achieving on any other measure of student success in career and technical education that is statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. Please identify.

**Numerator:** Number of graduating career and technical education concentrators who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Competent level on the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Specific Assessments or achieve competency on other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.

**Denominator:** Number of graduating career and technical education concentrators who complete the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Specific Assessments or other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.

## **Postsecondary Performance Indicators**

### **1P1 – Postsecondary Retention and Placement**

Section 113 (b)(2)(B)(i) The percentage of CTE concentrators who, in the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education, are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are placed or retained in employment.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who, during the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education, are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are placed or retained in employment.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who completed their program in the reporting year.

### **2P1 – Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential**

Section 113 (b)(2)(B)(ii) The percentage of CTE concentrators who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation in or within 1 year of program completion.\*

\*This means that a student gets counted under this indicator whether the student obtains the credential during participation or within 1 year of completion. The Department interprets “within 1 year of completion” to have the plain meaning of those words: that the student would be counted if the student obtains the credential in the 1 year following that student’s completion of the program.

29 USC 3102 WIOA Definitions Section (52) Recognized postsecondary credential.

The term “recognized postsecondary credential” means a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation in or within 1 year of program completion.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who left postsecondary education in the prior reporting year.

### **3P1 – Nontraditional Program Concentration**

Section 113 (b)(2)(B)(iii) The percentage of CTE concentrators in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators, from underrepresented gender groups, in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators in a CTE program or program of study that leads to a nontraditional field, during the reporting year.

### C. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

1.
  - a.
    - i.
      1.
        - a. **Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how:**
        - b. **Each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;**
        - c. **Each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and**
        - d. **Each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)**  
**Each eligible agency will submit a local application to the Department that includes a section focused on academic achievement. The eligible recipient will use information from the local needs assessment to identify needs specific to the recipient's students' academic achievement and determine action steps that will increase student performance. Academic achievement is not a postsecondary performance measure but will still be part of the local application and requirement for receipt of Perkins V funding. The Department's process includes program approval outlined in the previous section and data collection related to student attainment for each Perkins recipient.**

Approved CTE programs are required to be aligned to industry standards. The standards are those established by state or national trade or professional organizations or state or federal regulatory bodies accepted by the Department that describe what learners should know and be able to do and describe how well learners should know or be able to perform a task in a specific occupation.

The Department's process includes program approval outlined in the previous section and annual data collection related to student skill attainment including the collection of students earning a recognized postsecondary credential for each Perkins recipient.

The results of the comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) are part of the local application. The criteria the Department will use to ensure recipients are meeting local economic and education needs will be based on the review of the results of the CLNA.

Specific criteria for assessing the extent that the local application will promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment are as follows:

#### **Secondary Criteria**

- The action plan demonstrates meaningful progress on performance indicators including all subgroups. These are the activities that will be carried out during the current fiscal year.
- The end-of-year performance report demonstrates meaningful progress on performance indicators including all subgroups. The performance report explains how the grant recipient implemented activities to demonstrate meaningful progress.

### Postsecondary Criteria

- Student learning outcomes are demonstrating continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment. E-grant/local application include student learning outcomes provided to accreditor(s).
  - 
  - 
  - - **Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed:**
      - **Among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and**
      - **Among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)**

1. History of set aside amounts.
2. Number of career and technical enrollees.
3. Number of career and technical programs.
4. Consideration of full-time and part-time enrollment.
5. Consideration of overlap of facilities for programs.
6. Amounts of other state/federal reimbursement.
7. Stakeholder input.

During the state and regional stakeholders meeting the current split of funds was discussed. The discussion included how the secondary and postsecondary recipients are supported by state funds, local tax dollars, and tuition funds. The Department has accepted the conclusion of the discussion and is retaining the current split of funds. Secondary Perkins recipients will receive 70 percent of the allocation and postsecondary recipients including the adult recipients will receive 30 percent of the allocation. Secondary CTE begins with the all aspects of the industry and leads to technical skills that enable secondary students to sit for credential exams. Secondary students also learn and gain technical skills to the extent that through the POS, they earn college credits for the high school technical courses. The funding amounts serve a greater geographical area and is a greater means of developing a pipeline to postsecondary experiences

(apprenticeship, certificate, or degree) for high school graduates (apprenticeship, certificate, or degree).

All Perkins recipients (secondary and postsecondary) must align the academic and technical programs. The alignment is accomplished through the Department's statewide articulation agreements and through local articulation agreements where statewide agreements do not exist. The statewide agreement allows a high school graduate in eastern Pennsylvania to enroll in an institution of higher education located anywhere in the state if there is a direct program to program (carpentry to carpentry) offering. Therefore, there isn't a need for local or regional consortia to form. Statewide and local agreements and early postsecondary opportunities provides additional opportunities for students. This means each eligible Perkins recipient (secondary and postsecondary) remains an eligible agency and consortia are not formed. Because consortia are not formed, a consortia formula will not be developed and implemented.

1. **For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)**  
**Allocation total will be updated once USDE releases a state allocation amount. During the 2020-2021 program school year, \$26,843,412 will be made available to secondary consortia. Pennsylvania will continue to utilize the current formula to allocate Perkins funds to the local consortia, as USDE approved the formula and deemed it to be an objective and equitable means of allocating the funds. Allocations are calculated based on the following formula:**
  1. After elimination criteria, calculate the percentage of individual population age 5-17 by dividing the individual population age 5-17 by state total population age 5-17.
  2. Calculate the percentage of poverty age 5-17 by dividing individual poverty for age 5-17 by state total poverty for age 5-17.
  3. 70% allocation = poverty percentage  $\times$  (allocation amount  $\times$  0.7)
  4. 30% allocation = individual population percentage  $\times$  (allocation amount  $\times$  0.3)
  5. Total allocation = 70% allocation + 30% allocation

Allocations are summed and enrollments collected using PIMS, the state longitudinal data system for education data, and a unique identification number for each student.

Percentages of total student enrollments for each member of the consortia are collected by dividing each individual member of the consortia against the total number of all enrollments within the consortia to get a final percentage for each school. Total allocation then is divided by this percentage and allocated to the consortium fiscal agent. A consortia file is generated from the PDE Office of Data Quality, which drives the distribution to the fiscal agent.

<b>Fiscal Agent</b>	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
A W Beattie Career Center	\$292,611
Admiral Peary AVTS	\$138,133
Beaver County CTC	\$320,444
Bedford County Technical Center	\$83,351

<b>Fiscal Agent</b>	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
Berks CTC	\$513,200
Bermudian Springs SD	\$18,883
Bethlehem AVTS	\$343,406
Bradford Area SD	\$49,315
Bucks County Technical High School	\$419,335
Butler County AVTS	\$264,859
Carbon Career & Technical Institute	\$136,681
Career Institute of Technology	\$278,129
Carlisle Area SD	\$68,954
Central Montco Technical High School	\$282,996
Central PA Institute of Science & Technology	\$107,341
Central Westmoreland CTC	\$340,666
Chester County IU 24	\$770,368
Clarion County Career Center	\$102,407
Clearfield County CTC	\$128,226
Columbia-Montour AVTS	\$176,099
Connellsville Area Career & Technical Center	\$104,921
Corry Area SD	\$54,756
Crawford County CTC	\$168,142
CTC of Lackawanna County	\$517,183
Cumberland Perry AVTS	\$470,302
Dauphin County Technical School	\$658,965
Delaware County Technical High School	\$1,066,579
Delaware Valley SD	\$47,480
Eastern Center for Arts & Technology	\$268,854
Eastern Westmoreland CTC	\$110,134
Erie City SD	\$407,395
Erie County Technical School	\$338,736
Fayette County Career & Technical Institute	\$256,623
Forbes Road CTC	\$439,358
Franklin County CTC	\$352,573

<b>Fiscal Agent</b>	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
Fulton County AVTS	\$32,523
Gettysburg Area SD	\$108,860
Greater Altoona CTC	\$289,451
Greater Johnstown CTC	\$115,826
Greater Johnstown SD	\$108,668
Greene County CTC	\$85,590
Hazleton Area Career Center	\$237,386
Huntingdon County CTC	\$102,604
Indiana County Technology Center	\$165,586
Jefferson County-DuBois AVTS	\$188,579
Jersey Shore Area SD	\$38,781
Keystone Central CTC	\$91,663
Lancaster County CTC	\$918,684
Lancaster SD	\$220,841
Lawrence County CTC	\$214,190
Lebanon County CTC	\$303,790
Lehigh Career and Technical Institute	\$909,040
Lenape Tech	\$142,090
Lycoming CTC	\$100,500
McKeesport Area Tech Center	\$97,541
Mercer County Career Center	\$258,136
Middle Bucks Institute of Technology	\$286,594
Mifflin County Academy of Science and Tech	\$179,256
Milton Area SD	\$35,418
Mon Valley CTC	\$143,471
Monroe Career & Tech Inst \$367,047	\$367,047
North Montco Tech Career Center	\$315,298
Northern Bedford County SD	\$15,789
Northern Tier Career Center	\$185,538
Northern Tioga SD	\$36,536
Northern Westmoreland CTC	\$135,064



<b>Fiscal Agent</b>	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
Northumberland County CTC	\$99,246
Parkway West CTC	\$351,927
Philadelphia City SD	\$5,394,673
Pittsburgh SD	\$695,763
Pottstown SD	\$71,279
Reading Muhlenberg CTC	\$525,047
Saint Marys Area SD	\$29,021
Schuylkill Technology Centers	\$294,032
Selinsgrove Area SD	\$30,049
Seneca Highlands IU 9	\$120,700
Somerset County Technology Center	\$134,788
State College Area SD	\$74,168
Steel Center for Career and Technical Education	\$328,555
SUN Area Technical Institute	\$168,510
Susquehanna County CTC	\$119,738
Tunkhannock Area SD	\$25,118
Tyrone Area SD	\$16,699
Universal Audenried Charter School	\$366,764
Upper Bucks County Technical School	\$132,222
Upper Dauphin Area SD	\$27,621
Venango Technology Center	\$169,051
Wallenpaupack Area SD	\$43,779
Warren County AVTS	\$97,443
Wayne Highlands SD	\$40,011
Wellsboro Area SD	\$34,853
West Side CTC	\$227,029
Western Area CTC	\$214,665
Western Montgomery CTC	\$131,255
Wilkes-Barre Area CTC	\$436,562
Williamsport Area SD	\$141,168
York Co School of Technology	\$767,891

<b>Fiscal Agent</b>	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$27,862,822</b>

1. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.  
During the 2020-2021 program year, \$11,504,320 will be made available to postsecondary institutions. Allocation distribution is based on a percentage derived by dividing the individual number of each institution's student career and technical Pell count by the total number of career and technical Pell counts for all postsecondary and adult CTE programs. The percentage of career and technical Pell per institution is then applied against the total allocation awarded to the state producing a percentage of the total to be allocated to each individual postsecondary and adult CTE program.  
Allocation = (# of student career and technical Pell students at the institution ÷ Sum of career and technical Pell students for all postsecondary and adult CTE programs) × Allocation Amount
2. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V.)

	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
Bucks Co CC/ Main	\$135,052
Butler County Community Coll	\$143,514
Central PA Institute of Science & Technology	\$123,544
Community Coll of Allegheny Co	\$1,058,075
Community College of Beaver Co	\$263,334
Community College of Phila	\$1,929,310
Delaware County Community Coll	\$320,198
Greater Altoona CTC	\$106,620
HACC/ Main	\$1,082,783
Harcum College	\$359,461
Johnson College	\$89,019
Lackawanna College	\$258,595
Lancaster County CTC	\$225,086
Lehigh Carbon Community Coll	\$648,858
Lenape Tech	\$174,653

	<b>Tentative Allocation 2019-2020</b>
Luzerne County Community Coll	\$493,497
Manor College	\$69,387
Mercyhurst University	\$145,883
Montgomery County CC/ Main	\$615,010
Mount Aloysius College	\$74,465
Northampton Community College/ Main	\$667,474
Orleans Technical College	\$99,850
Peirce College	\$171,946
Penn College/PSU Affiliate	\$371,308
Pennsylvania Highlands Community College	\$145,206
Pennsylvania Inst of Tech	\$149,945
Pittsburgh Technical College	\$545,284
Reading Area Community College	\$527,006
Rosedale Technical College	\$121,174
Thaddeus Stevens Coll of Tech	\$189,546
Westmoreland County CC	\$522,945
Wilkes-Barre Area CTC	\$93,419
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,921,447</b>

Distribution of funds is based on the formula. When a school district boundary changes, the formula is adjusted to reflect the changes. The formula is adjusted for the following program year and reflects the correct Census and enrollment data associated with the changed boundary.

The Department does not have local education agencies with Department approved CTE programs without geographical boundaries.

1. **If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a):**
  1. **Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and**
  2. **Describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V.)**  
**Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).**

Pennsylvania's current funding process meets the federal requirements and is viewed as the most equitable means of distributing the funds. Therefore, the Department is not seeking a waiver to the secondary allocation and did not request a waiver under Perkins IV.

**1. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a):**

a.

- i. **Include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and**
- ii. **Describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V)**  
**Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).**

Pennsylvania's current process meets the federal requirements and is viewed as the most equitable way of serving the students who can benefit from the allocation. Therefore, the Department is not seeking a waiver to the postsecondary allocation and did not seek a waiver under Perkins IV.

**1. If the eligible agency will award reserve funds to eligible recipients under section 112(c) of Perkins V, describe the process and criteria for awarding those funds.**

Pennsylvania is not electing to award reserve funds.

1. **Provide the State's fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)**

The 2017-18 fiscal effort per student was \$974.27.

Due to an increase in the 2019-20 Perkins State Allocation and based on guidance from USDE, Pennsylvania is not seeking to establish a new baseline for fiscal effort.

2.

**1. Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality:**

a.

- i. **The percentage of CTE concentrators (See Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;**
- ii. **The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or**
- iii. **The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)**

**Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of “other” program quality measure(s) is optional for States.**

**Provide the eligible agency’s measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.**

**The Department, working with the state and regional stakeholders committee, has decided to select the program quality indicator that examines the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.**

**Numerator: Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential**

**Denominator: Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school.**

**Calculation: Match the 2018-19 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours who graduated to the last four years of CTE Industry Certification data. Determine the percent of students with a credential.**

**Source: CTE Industry Certification and CTE Student Fact in PIMS**

**The Department has also decided to retain the Perkins IV indicator for technical skill attainment. This indicator examines the percentage of CTE concentrators who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Competent level on the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Assessments, or other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.**

**Numerator: Number of graduating career and technical education concentrators who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Competent level on the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Specific Assessments or achieve competency on other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.**

**Denominator: Number of graduating career and technical education concentrators who complete the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Specific Assessments or other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.**

**Calculation: Match the 2018-19 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours who graduated to the NOCTI-NIMS data.**

**Determine the percent of students who achieved a level of competent or advanced.**

**Source: NOCTI-NIMS Collection and CTE Student Fact in PIMS**

2. **Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)**
- 3.
1. **A description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance. (See Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V).**

2. An explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8.
3. A description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws. (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V.)

As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

To determine the State Determined Levels of Performance, the Department and assessment specialists met and developed an hour-based definition of a course. Completion of a course is defined as completing 240 technical instructional hours. A concentrator then is a CTE student who has completed two CTE courses or 480 technical instructional hours in a Department approved secondary CTE program. The school year in Pennsylvania is 990 instructional hours, and CTE enrollment is defined as more than one hour per day for full-time study.

The team decided to present the SDLP as percentages. The team ensured the data provided are objective, quantifiable and measurable.

In order to ensure the state makes meaningful progress, the team assisted the Department in defining meaningful progress. To determine meaningful progress, the Department formed a team of assessment professionals who had worked on the ESSA Plan. The work included performance level targeting using the meaningful progress standard. This team performed various scenarios using student level data from the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) data from previous years to model indicator methodology and meaningful progress targeting. Upon review of the scenarios, the team recommended to use the halfway to 100 percent over 12 years as the meaningful progress standard to apply to all Perkins V indicator baselines.

As required data from states that have similar CTE programs, instruction, services, and comparable CTE concentrators was reviewed. The review considered how their levels of performance aligned to Pennsylvania's level of performance on the Perkins IV indicators. Data from New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Virginia, and West Virginia were examined.

These states were chosen because they established area CTCs, programs offered, definitions used, calculations and methodologies used. New York and Virginia have over 250,000 concentrators. West Virginia has approximately 20,000 concentrators compared to 40,000 to 100,000 concentrators in Oklahoma, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania has a student level data collection system. Methodology used by each state appears to be similar. The levels of performance vary except for Pennsylvania and Oklahoma. Based on the comparison, the Department's established the SDPLs.

Stakeholders were consulted pursuant to Section 113 of Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act in order to develop the levels of performance. The Department provided proposed state levels of performance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) required indicators on November 22, 2019 and through December 6, 2019, requested written comments and input on the proposed goals for each indicator. The materials provided to the stakeholders explained the process for establishing the baseline for each accountability indicator and included the baseline for each indicator.

Additionally, the stakeholders group was invited to participate in a meeting where the Department explained the process for establishing the baseline for each indicator and for establishing the SDPL. For those interested in discussing, raising questions or concerns, or offering comments on the process and baselines, they attended the meeting on December 3, 2019. During the meeting each of the performance indicators and the method used for establishing a baseline for each

indicator was reviewed and discussed.

The Department reviewed the initial comments on the preliminary SDPLs to develop and establish the levels. The SDPLs were subject to the public comment process described in Section 113 and the Department includes in this plan written response to comment provided by the stakeholders.

The final draft proposed levels were disseminated to the stakeholders for their review on December 17, 2019. Stakeholders were asked to review each indicator and provide written comment by December 27, 2019. The stakeholders were asked to review the process and baseline and provide written comment regarding either. Stakeholders were asked to submit written comments regarding how the established levels of performance:

1. **Meet the requirements of the law;**
2. **Support the improvement of performance for all CTE concentrators including each subgroup of students and special population; and**
3. **Support the needs of the local education and business community.**

The Department gathered written public comments on the SDPL and baseline for each indicator through designated PDE email account. The email address was posted on the Department's website and was provided to all stakeholders. Written stakeholder comments and the Department's response are found in Appendix E. As a result of stakeholder comments, the Department revised the SDPLs before bringing forward a final set of proposed goals for a second opportunity for public comment when the full draft state plan was released.

The SDPLs also reflect the Department's Perkins V goals.

1. **Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).**

**As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.**

Written stakeholder comments and the Department's response are found in Appendix E.

The Department modified three SDPL based on stakeholder feedback. Academic Proficiency in Science is not an accountability measure under Perkins V, nor are results on the Science assessment included in the federal accountability system required by ESSA, so it will not be required. Working with the U.S. Department of Education, it was determined to establish 25 percent as the target for the non-traditional indicators. For both the secondary and postsecondary Non-traditional Program Concentration indicator, the Department has developed a Performance Target Increment of .43 for Secondary Non-Traditional Program Concentration and .15 Performance Target Increment for Postsecondary Non-Traditional Program Concentration.

1. **Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V.)**  
**As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP)[1], the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-**

**based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.**

**The Department will analyze state level data to determine gaps and disparities between subgroups. The Department will also analyze secondary and postsecondary recipient data to determine which fiscal agents have the smallest and largest disparities to determine relevant best practices to publish and present at the Perkins workshops and technical assistance efforts.**

**The Technical Assistance Program (TAP) will include activities that support closing gaps in performance for the subgroups. Currently the Department looks at each special populations category by accountability measure. The TAP activities are focused on closing the gaps and disparities among the various subgroups. TAP has been described in an earlier section of the State plan, and TAP services are evidence based.**

3.

1.

b The eligible agency assures that:

1. It made the State plan publicly available for public comment[2] for a period of not less than 30 days, by electronic means and in an easily accessible format, prior to submission to the Secretary for approval and such public comments were considered in the development of this State plan. (Section 122(a)(4) of Perkins V.)
2. It will use the funds to promote preparation for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations and non-traditional fields, as identified by the State. (Section 122(d)(13)(C) of Perkins V.)
3. It will provide local educational agencies, area career and technical education schools, and eligible institutions in the State with technical assistance, including technical assistance on how to close gaps in student participation and performance in career and technical education programs. (section 122(d)(13)(E) of Perkins V.)
4. It will comply with the requirements of this Act and the provisions of the State plan, including the provision of a financial audit of funds received under this Act, which may be included as part of an audit of other Federal or State programs. (Section 122(d)(13)(A) of Perkins V.)
5. None of the funds expended under this Act will be used to acquire equipment (including computer software) in any instance in which such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the acquiring entity or the employees of the acquiring entity, or any affiliate of such an organization. (Section 122(d)(13)(B) of Perkins V.)
6. It will use the funds provided under this Act to implement career and technical education programs and programs of study for individuals in State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities. (Section 122 (d)(13)(D) of Perkins V.)

2.

b By submitting a Perkins V State Plan, consistent with 34 CFR 76.104, the eligible agency certifies that:

1. It is eligible to submit the Perkins State plan.



2. It has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the Perkins program(s).
  3. It legally may carry out each provision of the plan.
  4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law.
  5. A State officer, specified by title in Item C on the Cover Page, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan.
  6. The State officer who submits the plan, specified by title in Item C on the Cover Page, has authority to submit the plan.
  7. The entity has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan.
  8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the Perkins program.
- 3.
- b The eligible agency certifies and assures compliance with the following enclosed forms:
1. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B) Form (OMB Control No. 0348-0040).
  2. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF LLL) (OMB Control No. 4040-0013).[3]
  3. Certification Regarding Lobbying (ED 80-0013 Form).
  4. **General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) 427 Form (OMB Control No. 1894-0005).**

[1] See page 11 of the Committee Report.

[2] An eligible agency that submits a 1-Year Transition Plan in FY 2019 is not required to hold a public comment period on the 1-Year Transition Plan. Such agency must assure that it meets this public comment requirement prior to submitting its Perkins V State Plan in FY 2020.

[3][https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SFLLL\\_1\\_2-V1.2.pdf](https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SFLLL_1_2-V1.2.pdf)

#### D. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

- 1.
1. **Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality:**
  - a.
    - i. **The percentage of CTE concentrators (See Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;**
    - ii. **The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or**
    - iii. **The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section**

**113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)**

**Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of “other” program quality measure(s) is optional for States.**

**Provide the eligible agency’s measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.**

**The Department, working with the state and regional stakeholders committee, has decided to select the program quality indicator that examines the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.**  
**Numerator: Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential**  
**Denominator: Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school.**

**Calculation: Match the 2018-19 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours who graduated to the last four years of CTE Industry Certification data. Determine the percent of students with a credential.**

**Source: CTE Industry Certification and CTE Student Fact in PIMS**  
**The Department has also decided to retain the Perkins IV indicator for technical skill attainment. This indicator examines the percentage of CTE concentrators who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Competent level on the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Assessments, or other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.**

**Numerator: Number of graduating career and technical education concentrators who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Competent level on the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Specific Assessments or achieve competency on other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.**

**Denominator: Number of graduating career and technical education concentrators who complete the NOCTI Job Ready Occupational Specific Assessments or other PDE approved tests in the reporting year.**

**Calculation: Match the 2018-19 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours who graduated to the NOCTI-NIMS data.**

**Determine the percent of students who achieved a level of competent or advanced.**

**Source: NOCTI-NIMS Collection and CTE Student Fact in PIMS**

- 2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)**
- 3.**
- 1. A description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance. (See Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V).**

2. An explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8.
3. A description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws. (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V.)

As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

To determine the State Determined Levels of Performance, the Department and assessment specialists met and developed an hour-based definition of a course. Completion of a course is defined as completing 240 technical instructional hours. A concentrator then is a CTE student who has completed two CTE courses or 480 technical instructional hours in a Department approved secondary CTE program. The school year in Pennsylvania is 990 instructional hours, and CTE enrollment is defined as more than one hour per day for full-time study.

The team decided to present the SDLP as percentages. The team ensured the data provided are objective, quantifiable and measurable.

In order to ensure the state makes meaningful progress, the team assisted the Department in defining meaningful progress. To determine meaningful progress, the Department formed a team of assessment professionals who had worked on the ESSA Plan. The work included performance level targeting using the meaningful progress standard. This team performed various scenarios using student level data from the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) data from previous years to model indicator methodology and meaningful progress targeting. Upon review of the scenarios, the team recommended to use the halfway to 100 percent over 12 years as the meaningful progress standard to apply to all Perkins V indicator baselines.

As required data from states that have similar CTE programs, instruction, services, and comparable CTE concentrators was reviewed. The review considered how their levels of performance aligned to Pennsylvania's level of performance on the Perkins IV indicators. Data from New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Virginia, and West Virginia were examined.

These states were chosen because they established area CTCs, programs offered, definitions used, calculations and methodologies used. New York and Virginia have over 250,000 concentrators. West Virginia has approximately 20,000 concentrators compared to 40,000 to 100,000 concentrators in Oklahoma, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania has a student level data collection system. Methodology used by each state appears to be similar. The levels of performance vary except for Pennsylvania and Oklahoma. Based on the comparison, the Department's established the SDPLs.

Stakeholders were consulted pursuant to Section 113 of Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act in order to develop the levels of performance. The Department provided proposed state levels of performance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) required indicators on November 22, 2019 and through December 6, 2019, requested written comments and input on the proposed goals for each indicator. The materials provided to the stakeholders explained the process for establishing the baseline for each accountability indicator and included the baseline for each indicator.

Additionally, the stakeholders group was invited to participate in a meeting where the Department explained the process for establishing the baseline for each indicator and for establishing the SDPL. For those interested in discussing, raising questions or concerns, or offering comments on the process and baselines, they attended the meeting on December 3, 2019. During the meeting each of the performance indicators and the method used for establishing a baseline for each

indicator was reviewed and discussed.

The Department reviewed the initial comments on the preliminary SDPLs to develop and establish the levels. The SDPLs were subject to the public comment process described in Section 113 and the Department includes in this plan written response to comment provided by the stakeholders.

The final draft proposed levels were disseminated to the stakeholders for their review on December 17, 2019. Stakeholders were asked to review each indicator and provide written comment by December 27, 2019. The stakeholders were asked to review the process and baseline and provide written comment regarding either. Stakeholders were asked to submit written comments regarding how the established levels of performance:

1. **Meet the requirements of the law;**
2. **Support the improvement of performance for all CTE concentrators including each subgroup of students and special population; and**
3. **Support the needs of the local education and business community.**

The Department gathered written public comments on the SDPL and baseline for each indicator through designated PDE email account. The email address was posted on the Department's website and was provided to all stakeholders. Written stakeholder comments and the Department's response are found in Appendix E. As a result of stakeholder comments, the Department revised the SDPLs before bringing forward a final set of proposed goals for a second opportunity for public comment when the full draft state plan was released.

The SDPLs also reflect the Department's Perkins V goals.

1. **Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).**

**As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.**

Written stakeholder comments and the Department's response are found in Appendix E.

The Department modified three SDPL based on stakeholder feedback. Academic Proficiency in Science is not an accountability measure under Perkins V, nor are results on the Science assessment included in the federal accountability system required by ESSA, so it will not be required. Working with the U.S. Department of Education, it was determined to establish 25 percent as the target for the non-traditional indicators. For both the secondary and postsecondary Non-traditional Program Concentration indicator, the Department has developed a Performance Target Increment of .43 for Secondary Non-Traditional Program Concentration and .15 Performance Target Increment for Postsecondary Non-Traditional Program Concentration.

1. **Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V.)**  
**As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP)[1], the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-**

based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

The Department will analyze state level data to determine gaps and disparities between subgroups. The Department will also analyze secondary and postsecondary recipient data to determine which fiscal agents have the smallest and largest disparities to determine relevant best practices to publish and present at the Perkins workshops and technical assistance efforts.

The Technical Assistance Program (TAP) will include activities that support closing gaps in performance for the subgroups. Currently the Department looks at each special populations category by accountability measure. The TAP activities are focused on closing the gaps and disparities among the various subgroups. TAP has been described in an earlier section of the State plan, and TAP services are evidence based.

#### 1. Form

##### Pennsylvania

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline Level</b>	<b>Performance Levels</b>			
<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>		
<b>Secondary Indicators</b>					
1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate	92.19	92.55	92.91	93.27	93.63
1S2: Extended Graduation Rate	94.39	94.65	94.91	95.17	95.43
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	50.8	0	55.28	57.52	59.76
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	41.8	0	47.1	49.75	52.4
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	0	0	0	0	0
3S1: Post-Program Placement	92.48	92.82	93.16	93.51	93.84
4S1: Non-traditional Program Concentration	15.49	15.92	16.35	16.78	17.21
5S1: Program Quality – Attained	65.56	67.13	68.7	70.27	71.84

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Recognized Postsecondary Credential					
5S2: Program Quality – Attained Postsecondary Credits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work- Based Learning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5S4: Program Quality – Other[1] Technical Skill Attainment	84.27	0	85.71	86.43	87.15
Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline Level</b>	<b>Performance Levels</b>			
<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>		
<b>Postsecondary Indicators</b>					
1P1: Post-Program Placement	93.11	93.42	93.73	94.04	94.35
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	90.2	90.65	91.1	91.55	92
3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration	21.66	21.81	21.96	22.11	22.26

[1] The Perkins V State Plan Portal will allow an eligible agency to include on this form as many “other” program quality indicators as they choose.

[1] See page 11 of the Committee Report.

### **Stakeholder Comment on State Determined Performance Levels and Response**

Stakeholder comments on SDPLs were due December 27, 2019. The Department received comments from four stakeholders.

### **Rosedale Technical College**

**Comment:** 1P1: Post-Program Placement meets the requirements of the law but does not support the improvement of performance of all concentrators nor does it support the needs of the local education and business community. Employment should be related to the field of study to qualify. Otherwise the training program isn't achieving its goal. Then with the field of study condition, the numerical goals should be revised.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the value of the comment. Federal regulation does not require employment be related to the field of study. The regulation requires the "percentage of CTE concentrators who, during the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education, are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are placed or retained in employment."

**Comment:** 2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration meets the requirements of the law but does not support the improvement of performance of all concentrators nor supports the needs of the local education and business community. The "one size fits all" approach taken in the plan for 3P1 has zero value as an actionable metric. Expecting 21.66% female participation for Electricians is absurd, just as expecting 21.66% male nurses is way too easy. The plan for 3P1 is worthless and will do nothing to support the goals of the law.

**Response:** The Department is in communication with the US Department of Education to determine if alternative methodology would be acceptable while meeting the intent of the regulation.

### **AW Beattie Career Center**

**Comment:** 1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 1S2: Extended Graduation Rate does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment :**2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 3S1: Post-Program Placement does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 4S1: Non-traditional Program Concentration does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 5S1: Program Quality – attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 5S4: Program Quality – Technical Skill Attainment does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 1P1: Post-Program Placement does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.



**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate does meet the requirements of the law and support the improvement of performance of all concentrators. It does not support the needs of the local education and business community. The PIMS reference guide states: EdNA classified Occupational CTCs do not receive a cohort graduation rate and the sending LEA must report this graduation/dropout information. Occupational CTCs data would be incomplete or non-existent if the data is collected directly from the Occupational CTCs Student template. Likewise, if the sending school fails to report the information in their templates for a graduating Occupational CTC student, then the information could be incomplete or non-existent.

**Response:** Graduate cohort data are federally defined and approved, and therefore, cannot change. The specific calculation is to match the 2017-18 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours to the four-year cohort graduate data.

**Comment:** 1S2: Extended Graduation Rate does meet the requirements of the law and supports the improvement of performance of all concentrators. It does not support the needs of the local education and business community. Continuing from 1S1, CTCs will have little impact on their own data and not be able to correct inaccurate information to ensure appropriate data is sent to the reporting agency.

**Response:** Graduate cohort data are federally defined and approved, and therefore, cannot change. The specific calculation is to match 2016-17 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours to the frozen cohort graduate data for extended year graduates.

: 2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics does meet the requirements of the law but does not support the improvement of performance of all concentrators or support the needs of the local education and business community. Considering when the student takes Algebra I, middle school or high school, the concentrator status does not match and therefore could significantly impact the performance indicator. CTE should not be responsible for tests before the students come to CTE: there is very little way to demonstrate growth.

**Response:** The best of 11<sup>th</sup> grade Keystone results have been federally approved for ESSA accountability reporting. The best of 11<sup>th</sup> grade results include remediation and retesting. The CTCs and sending districts should work together to ensure those students who are anticipated to reach CTE concentrator status have the opportunity to test, remediate, and retest. The calculation is a match of the 2018-19 CTE students with 480 or more cumulative hours to the 2018-19 Keystone/PASA Algebra best of 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Comment:** 2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science does meet the requirements of the law and supports the improvement of performance of all concentrators. It does not support the needs of

the local education and business community. This Performance Indicator does not support the local education and business community since PA has chosen Biology as the content area for Science. This content area does not align with many CTE programs and therefore does not impact the career pathway to the business community. It is encouraged that the state consider an alternative test to measure proficiency in Science.

**Response:** The Department is communicating with US Department of Education regarding the use of this indicator.

: 4S1: Non-traditional Program Concentration does meet the requirements of the law. It does not support the improvement of performance of all concentrators or the needs of the local education and business community. A concentrator is a measure of student retention, which is where the state has struggled the most historically to reach above 12% and maintain it as measured by Perkins IV 6S2 completion data. By assuming a baseline of 15.49%, the state will set itself up for deficiency in meeting the indicator. Additionally, the performance target increment is set at 10% which is significantly above the ACTE recommendation of .5% or 1%.

**Response:** Under Perkins IV, the Department performed at 16.86% for 6S1 Non-Traditional Participation and 13.64% on Non-Traditional Completion on the 2018 CAR. The Perkins V Concentration Non-Traditional indicator is between the Perkins IV Participation Non-Traditional indicator and Completion Non-Traditional indicator with a baseline of 15.49%. The proposed baseline for Perkins V is a state average and the incremental increase of 1.57%.

**Comment:** 5S1: Program Quality – Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential does meet the requirements of the law. It does not support the improvement of performance of all concentrators or support the needs of the local education and business community. This is an incomplete record of student post-secondary achievement. CTE students successfully complete technical dual enrollment courses (in addition to dual credit) and the CTC should be recognized when secondary students earn a college transcript. A college transcript should be added to the list of recognized post-secondary credentials along with industry recognized certificates or certification, and a license recognized by the state involved or federal government.

**Response:** The Department uses the federal definition, which does not include completion of postsecondary courses. "A credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree."

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#### **Sandra Himes, Career and Technical Distinguished School Leader**

**Comment :**1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 1S2: Extended Graduation Rate does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

### **Comment**

3S1: Post-Program Placement does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 4S1: Non-traditional Program Concentration does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 5S1: Program Quality – attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 5S4: Program Quality – Technical Skill Attainment does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 1P1: Post-Program Placement does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment:** 2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

**Comment**

3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration does meet the requirements of the law, support the improvement of performance of all concentrators and supports the needs of the local education and business community.

**Response:** The Department recognizes the comment.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER SECTION 6(D)(4) OF THE FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(D)(4)))

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS [27]

1. THE NATURE OF THE E&T COMPONENTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER AND THE REASONS FOR SUCH COMPONENTS, INCLUDING COST INFORMATION. THE METHODOLOGY FOR STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT FOR EDUCATION COMPONENTS MUST BE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED. IF A STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (E)(2)(I) OF THIS SECTION, THE STATE AGENCY MUST ALSO INCLUDE IN THE E&T PLAN A SUMMARY OF THE STATE GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTING SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH. THIS SUMMARY OF THE STATE GUIDELINES, AT A MINIMUM, MUST DESCRIBE: THE CRITERIA USED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO APPROVE LOCATIONS FOR SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH, AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THOSE CRITERIA WERE CHOSEN, AND HOW THE SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH COMPONENT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS TO DIRECTLY SUPERVISE THE ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS AND TRACK THE TIMING AND ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS;

Supervised Job Search (SJS)	Answer the question in the space below
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Supervised Job Search (SJS)	Answer the question in the space below
<p><b>Summary of the State guidelines implementing supervised job search.</b> This summary of the State guidelines, at a minimum, must describe: The criteria used by the State agency to approve locations for supervised job search, an explanation of why those criteria were chosen, and</p> <p>how the supervised job search component meets the requirements to directly supervise the activities of participants and track the timing and activities of participants.</p>	<p>Supervised job search component serves job-ready participants engaged in job-seeking activities, either individually or as a group at state-approved locations. Case managers validate client's job search activities through discussions and guidance at minimum once per month. Job-seeking activities may include counseling, provision of local labor market information, and instruction in job-seeking skills, and a minimum effort of 12 hours per month. Job Search can be conducted at state-approved locations including American Job Centers, online via CWDS/Job Gateway, or at facilities operated by a contracted E&amp;T service provider included in this Plan. Locations were selected based on alignment with PA's workforce development system, and to ensure E&amp;T participants may utilize the job search component in a space similar to the one in which they engage in other components. Online or internet-based job applications will be tracked by the case manager, who will provide continuous advice to participants as the component progresses.</p>
<p><b>Direct link.</b> Explain how the State agency will ensure that supervised job search activities will have a direct link to increasing the employment opportunities of individuals engaged in the activity (i.e. how the State agency will screen to ensure individuals referred to SJS have the skills to be successful in SJS and how the SJS program is tailored to employment opportunities in the community).</p>	<p>PA DHS has ensured a direct link for Supervised Job Search in each contracted program. SNAP EARN is required to provide employability assessment and case management to all participants not only by regulation, but also by program design through their contract. They complete a service plan and have access to Job Search Training services to assist. SNAP EARNs are contracted with the Workforce Development Boards, are able to leverage local resources and employer partnerships, and uniquely suited to providing the Supervised Job Search component.</p> <p>SNAP 50/50s are designed so that Supervised Job Search is only offered following completion of vocational education or work experience components, when participants are ready to put their new skills into action. As part of the onboarding process for each new SNAP 50/50 third party partner, PA DHS reviews the partner's ties to employers in the community as well as the job coaching and placement services.</p>
<p><b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that</p>	<p>This component is open to any E&amp;T</p>

<b>Supervised Job Search (SJS)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	<p>Participation in this component is determined at the contractor level. Each contractor may determine the suitability of a participant for this component.</p> <p>Typically, individuals are encouraged to enroll in a supervised job search period following successful completion of another SNAP E&amp;T component.</p>
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by American Job Centers, etc.)	Statewide
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	<p>SNAP EARN and SNAP 50-50 contractor groups</p> <p>Note: Graduates of the SNAP KEYS program are referred to SNAP EARN after graduation for assistance with job placement.</p>
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	600
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$1,414,423

	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a brief description of the activities and services.</b>	Job Search Training component prepares individuals for the workplace by teaching interviewing techniques, preparation of resumes, employer expectations, and basic life skills.
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	This component is open to any E&T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor</b>	Participation in this component is determined at the contractor level. Each contractor may determine the suitability of a

	Answer the question in the space below
market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	participant for this component.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.)	Statewide
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	All contracted groups
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	840
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$2,234,485

Job Retention (JR)	Answer the question in the space below
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services. Include a description of how the State will ensure services are provided for no less 30 days and no more than 90 days.</b>	<p>Includes services designed to assist individuals to successfully transition into the workplace and retain employment. This component includes financial literacy planning, job coaching, and workplace literacy services. This component is offered to each participant for a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 90 days.</p> <p>Consistent with federal rules, this component is offered for the full period of up to 90 days notwithstanding a participant's loss of eligibility for SNAP benefits.</p>
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	This component is open to any E&T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	Participation in this component is determined at the contractor level. Each contractor may determine the suitability of a participant for this component. The only prerequisite that PA DHS places on enrollment in this component is that the participant must have started a new job while participating in another SNAP E&T component.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, area covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Statewide

<b>Job Retention (JR)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	All contracted groups
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	540
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$1,391,988

<b>E&amp;T Workfare (W)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services</b>	<p>Workfare is an unpaid work activity used to provide opportunities for ABAWDs to serve in a community service capacity in the federal, state or local government or nonprofit sector. Workfare enhances an individual's employability by helping to develop effective work habits and basic job skills, including organization skills, problem solving, and basic math skills or to brush up existing skills needed for the work environment, through unpaid employment. The maximum number of hours is determined by the CAO, which calculates this figure by dividing the household's benefit level by the federal minimum wage. Participants perform workfare for the number of hours calculated by the CAO and listed on the EDP.</p> <p>The maximum number of hours worked in community service, combined with any hours worked during the week by a participant for compensation (in cash or in kind) in any other capacity must not exceed 30 hours per week.</p> <p>The CAO is required to ensure all ABAWDs participating in E&amp;T, including ABAWDs participating in community service, continue to meet the work requirement. E&amp;T contracted programs open an activity code in CWDS immediately upon referral to indicate that the participant has secured a community service position. The E&amp;T contracted program then uses a state-issued form, the PA 1938, to establish a non-financial agreement with the community service provider, in which the provider certifies the proposed schedule of</p>



E&T Workfare (W)	Answer the question in the space below
	<p>service and agrees to report any change in the individual's participation in community service within 10 days from the date the change occurred.</p> <p>E&amp;T contracted programs follow up by entering the hours served in the position by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the calendar month following the month in which participation occurred. E&amp;T contracted programs are instructed to terminate the participant in CWDS if they do not meet the hours listed on the EDP. Participation hours entered into CWDS by the E&amp;T contracted programs can be viewed by the CAO in eCIS the day following data entry. CWDS terminations are likewise automatically communicated to the CAO the following day.</p> <p>By reviewing the activity codes opened, the monthly data-entry of hours, and the receipt of E&amp;T termination notifications, the CAO is able to take action to discontinue benefits to ABAWDs who are no longer meeting the work requirement through participation in E&amp;T, pursuant to 7 CFR §273.7(m)(9)(ii).</p>
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	ABAWDs
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	Participation in this component is determined at the contractor level. Each contractor may determine the suitability of a participant for this component.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Statewide
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will	SNAP EARN and SNAP KEYS

<b>E&amp;T Workfare (W)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
provide the service.	
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	180
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$338,939

## I. Educational Programs

<b>Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Programs) (EPB)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services</b>	This component is designed to increase employability of participants through an appropriate course of literacy, numeracy, and basic skills education equivalent to successful completion of the 8 <sup>th</sup> grade. For individuals who successfully attain this level of proficiency, or who already demonstrated it upon placement into the component, this component will also prepare a participant to qualify for a high school general equivalency diploma or equivalent certification.
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	This component is open to any E&T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	For GED/high school equivalency services only, an individual must be functioning at the 8 <sup>th</sup> grade level or above to enroll.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Statewide
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SNAP EARN
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	120
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$420,039
<b>Not supplanting.</b> Federal E&T funds used for	SNAP EARN contractors are provided with

<b>Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Programs) (EPB)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
activities within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	guidance prohibiting the use of funds to supplant existing state entitlements. Generally, if a service is available from a reputable provider in the community at no charge, SNAP EARN programs are expected to refer the participant to the no-charge provider and bill DHS only for the cost of providing case management, supportive services, and supplemental activities that are provided to the SNAP participant, but not available to the general public.
<b>Cost Parity.</b> If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	Contractors are advised of the requirement that costs charged to the E&T grant may not exceed costs charged to or for non-E&T participants.

<b>Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services</b>	<p>This component provides occupational skills training that lead certifications, industry-recognized credentials, and in-demand jobs. Only educational activities that directly enhance the employability of the participant are allowed.</p> <p>This component also includes credit-bearing certificate programs and career-specific degrees that enhance participants' employability. Program partners include but are not limited to: Pennsylvania's community colleges and state-owned universities.</p> <p>ABAWDs are advised that they may appropriately combine this component with up to 10 hours/week of job search and/or job search training to meet the work requirement.</p>

Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)	Answer the question in the space below
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	This component is open to any E&T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer.
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	Most contracted partners have specific criteria for admission into their program that align with labor market demand. For example, completion of high school; verification of literacy or numeracy levels; or, in limited instances, criminal history requirements.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, area covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Statewide
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	Both contracted partners and the SNAP agency
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	3,720
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$9,877,555
<b>Not supplanting.</b> Federal E&T funds used for activities within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	Contractors are provided with guidance prohibiting the use of funds to supplant existing state entitlements. Generally, if a service is available from a reputable provider in the community at no charge, contractors are expected to refer the participant to the no-charge provider and bill DHS only for the cost of providing case management, supportive services, and supplemental activities that are provided to the SNAP participant, but not available to the general public.
<b>Cost Parity.</b> If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	In the SNAP KEYS program, tuition is generally not paid for with SNAP E&T funds, and KEYS coordinators are expected to refer students to free resources available on campus to all students. KEYS contractors then use funds to pay for case management, supportive services, and additional activities and enhanced services (not available to non-E&T participants) that address the unique needs of the E&T participant population.

Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)	Answer the question in the space below
	SNAP 50/50 third-party partners, which are community-based organizations, are required to bill DHS for SNAP E&T participants consistently with the amount charged per non-E&T student to their other charitable donations or grants.

English Language Acquisition (EPEL)	Answer the question in the space below
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.</b>	Formal education training specifically designed to improve an individual's proficiency in English needed to compete in the current job market.
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted for participation in the component. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	This component is open to any E&T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer.
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	The participant has expressed that English is not their first language.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Statewide
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	Both contracted partners and the SNAP agency.
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	120
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$293,413
<b>Not supplanting.</b> Federal E&T funds used for activities within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	Contractors are provided with guidance prohibiting the use of funds to supplant existing state entitlements. Generally, if a service is available from a reputable provider in the community at no charge, contractors are expected to refer the participant to the no-charge provider and bill DHS only for the cost of providing case management, supportive services, and supplemental activities that are provided to the SNAP

English Language Acquisition (EPEL)	Answer the question in the space below
	participant, but not available to the general public.
<b>Cost Parity.</b> If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	Contractors are advised of the requirement that costs charged to the E&T grant may not exceed costs charged to or for non-E&T participants.

## II. Work Experience

Work experience is divided into two subcomponents per 7 CFR 273.7(e)(2)(iv): Work activity (WA) and Work-based learning (WBL). WBL activities like internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training, among others, may provide wages subsidized by the E&T program. In order to capture information about WBL activities that may be subsidized or unsubsidized by E&T, there are two sets of tables below for each kind of WBL activity – one table for activities not subsidized by E&T (e.g. Work-based learning – Internships) and another for activities subsidized by E&T (e.g. Work-based learning – Internships - Subsidized by E&T). Note that subsidized means programs where E&T funding is used to subsidize wages of participants. Subsidized in this context does not mean programs where participants receive a subsidized wage from another source.

Internship (WBLI)	Answer the question in the space below
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.</b>	Short-term entry-level work experience with an employer in an industry associated with the participant's course of study and supervised or case managed by the E&T provider. The participant may or may not be paid by the employer, however wages will not be subsidized with E&T dollars.
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	Community College students
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	This component is open to E&T participants who are simultaneously enrolled in or recently were enrolled in the career/technical education programs or other vocational training component.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Statewide, including areas covered by Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges

<b>Internship (WBLI)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SNAP KEYS
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	60
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$94,595

<b>Pre-Apprenticeship/ Apprenticeship (WBLPA)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services to be offered.</b>	<p>Registered pre-apprenticeships (RPAs) that expand participants' career pathway opportunities with industry-based training and classroom instruction, preparing individuals to enter and succeed in registered apprenticeships (RAs) or other unsubsidized employment. RPAs are typically conducted in a classroom setting, with participants also experiencing simulated job environments to gain relevant hands-on experience.</p> <p>ABAWDs are advised that they may appropriately combine this component with up to 10 hours/week of job search and/or job search training to meet the work requirement.</p>
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.)	<p>This component is open to any E&amp;T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer.</p> <p>Berks Connection Pretrial services focuses on serving Returning Citizens.</p>
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	Each contracted partner has specific criteria for admission into their program that align with labor market demand. For example, completion of high school; verification of literacy or numeracy levels; or, in limited instances, criminal history requirements.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered	Philadelphia, Allegheny, and Berks Counties

<b>Pre-Apprenticeship/</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Apprenticeship (WBLPA)</b>	
by the American Job Centers, etc.).	
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SNAP 50/50 (Samuel Staten Sr. Pre-Apprenticeship Program, New Century Careers, and Berks Connection Pretrial Services)
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	312
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$1,611,371

<b>Transitional Jobs (WBLTJ)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.</b>	Transitional Job activities provide time-limited work experiences that are wage-paid, but not subsidized, and are in the public, private, non-profit sectors for those individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed and have inconsistent work history. These jobs are designed to enable an individual to establish a work history, demonstrate work success in an employee-employer relationship, and develop the skills that lead to unsubsidized employment. Training objectives include enhanced coaching designed to build non-cognitive (soft) skills, as well as job skills specific to the participant's specific TJ placement, which can be in industries such as distribution/supply chain, food processing and manufacturing, hospitality, printing/imaging, and restoration/large loss.
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	Returning citizens, homeless, chronically unemployed.
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	This component is open to any E&T participant who meets criteria for participation and wishes to volunteer. <b>Participation in this component is determined at the contractor level. Each contractor may determine the suitability of a participant for this component.</b>
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Philadelphia, Bucks, and surrounding counties



<b>Transitional Jobs (WBLTJ)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SNAP 50/50 (First Step Staffing)
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	125
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$548,073

<b>Transitional Jobs – Subsidized by E&amp;T (WBLTJ) - SUB)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services. Include the training objectives for each subsidized activity and how the State agency will ensure that the subsidized activity serves as a training to move participants into unsubsidized employment.</b>	Transitional Job activities provide time-limited work experiences that are wage-paid, with wages 50% reimbursed with E&T dollars. Placements are in the public, private, non-profit sectors for those individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed and have inconsistent work history. Placements are limited to no longer than 75 working days, which may be consecutive or non-consecutive. Participants receive wages at the end of each working day. These jobs are designed to enable an individual to establish a work history, demonstrate work success in an employee-employer relationship, and develop the skills that lead to unsubsidized employment. Training objectives include non-cognitive (soft) skills, as well as job skills specific to the participant's specific TJ placement, which can be in industries such as landscaping/land reclamation, building renovation, and litter abatement.
<b>Target Population.</b> Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	Returning citizens
<b>Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)</b>	Participation is limited to individuals who have been released from state incarceration and are under state supervision/parole. In some instances, individuals released from county incarceration and under county supervision/probation may also be eligible.
<b>Geographic Area.</b> Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Philadelphia, Allegheny, Dauphin and surrounding counties.

<b>Transitional Jobs – Subsidized by E&amp;T (WBLT) - SUB)</b>	<b>Answer the question in the space below</b>
<b>E&amp;T Providers.</b> Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SNAP 50/50 (Center for Employment Opportunities)
<b>Projected Annual Participation.</b> Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	247
<b>Estimated Annual Component Costs.</b> Project only administrative costs.	\$2,836,814

2. A DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND MODELS, HOW PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REFERRED TO CASE MANAGEMENT, HOW THE PARTICIPANT'S CASE WILL BE MANAGED, WHO WILL PROVIDE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES, AND HOW THE SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL COORDINATE WITH E&T PROVIDERS, THE STATE AGENCY, AND OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES, AS APPROPRIATE. THE STATE PLAN SHOULD ALSO DISCUSS HOW THE STATE AGENCY WILL ENSURE E&T PARTICIPANTS ARE PROVIDED WITH TARGETED CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES THROUGH AN EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS;

### Section B - Operating Budget

*Instructions for completion: Complete all cells, as applicable that are shown in gray. The cells that are blue are either being prepopulated from contracts or partnerships table or will automatically calculate and populate some of the cells that are included in the Funding Sources table. the Non-Federal Share will include any State/local funds or funds being provided through third-party partnerships. Federal share will include the 100 percent Federal E&T funds and the federal share of the 50/50 funds.*

Expense Category	Non-Federal Share	Federal Share	Total
<b>I. Direct Program and Admin Costs</b>			
Salary/Wages (State agency only)	\$ 449,672.00	\$ 1,281,322.00	\$ 1,730,994.00
Fringe Benefits - provide approved fringe benefit rate percentage in line 8 below. Or provide total fringe benefits in line 9 if multiple rates are used by the State agency			
<b>87.80%</b>	\$ 394,812.00	\$ 1,125,001.00	\$ 1,519,813.00
<b>Fringe Benefits -</b>			\$ -
Non-capital equipment		\$ 161,376.00	\$ 161,376.00
Materials		\$ -	\$ -
Travel	\$ -	\$ 2,137.00	\$ 2,137.00

Expense Category	Non-Federal Share	Federal Share	Total
Building Space	\$ -	\$ 164,359.00	\$ 164,359.00
Equipment and other capital expenditures	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Subtotal - State agency costs only</i>	\$ 844,484.00	\$ 2,734,195.00	\$ 3,578,679.00
Contractual Costs: <i>Is prepopulating from Contract-Partnerships Table, must not include Participant reimbursements.</i>	\$ 6,745,729.50	\$ 10,737,286.50	\$ 17,483,016.00
County Administered Program Admin Cost, if applicable: <i>Is prepopulating from County Admin Budget.</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Direct Program and Admin Costs	\$ 7,590,213.50	\$ 13,471,481.50	\$ 21,061,695.00
<b>II. Indirect Costs:</b> <i>Indirect costs are only calculated on the subtotal of State agency costs only.</i>			
Indirect Costs - provide approved indirect cost rate percentage in line 23 below.			
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>III. In-kind contribution</b>			
State in-kind contribution	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Administrative Costs</b>	\$ 7,590,213.50	\$ 13,471,481.50	\$ 21,061,695.00
<b>IV. Participant Reimbursements</b>			
Dependent Care (including costs from contracts/partners and	\$ 1,600,000.00	\$ 1,600,000.00	\$ 3,200,000.00

Expense Category	Non-Federal Share	Federal Share	Total
county administered programs)			
Transportation & Other costs (including costs from contracts/partners and county administered programs)	\$ 1,310,000.00	\$ 1,310,000.00	\$ 2,620,000.00
State Agency Cost for Dependent Care	\$ -		\$ -
Total Participant Reimbursements	\$ 2,910,000.00	\$ 2,910,000.00	\$ 5,820,000.00
<b>V. Total Costs</b>	<b>\$ 10,500,213.50</b>	<b>\$ 16,381,481.50</b>	<b>\$ 26,881,695.00</b>

3. AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR WITH AN ESTIMATE OF THE COST OF OPERATION FOR EACH FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR COVERED BY THE COMBINED PLAN. ANY STATE AGENCY THAT REQUESTS 50 PERCENT FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE AGENCY E&T ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, OTHER THAN FOR PARTICIPANT REIMBURSEMENTS, MUST INCLUDE IN ITS PLAN, OR AMENDMENTS TO ITS PLAN, AN ITEMIZED LIST OF ALL ACTIVITIES AND COSTS FOR WHICH THOSE FEDERAL FUNDS WILL BE CLAIMED, INCLUDING THE COSTS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT AND CASEWORK TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION FROM ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH WORK. COSTS IN EXCESS OF THE FEDERAL GRANT WILL BE ALLOWED ONLY WITH THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF FNS AND MUST BE ADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED TO ASSURE THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY, REASONABLE AND PROPERLY ALLOCATED. A STATE MUST SUBMIT A PLAN AMENDMENT TO REQUEST BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AT LEAST 30 DAYS PRIOR TO PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION;

#### **SNAP E&T Projected Participation**

A) Anticipated number of work registrants in the State during the Federal FY. This is an unduplicated count. Take into consideration the expected number of work registrants in the State on October 1st as well as the number of new work registrants expected throughout the Federal Fiscal Year.	516,189
B) List State exemptions from E&T and the number of work registrants expected to be exempted under each category. A State operating a voluntary program would show that all work registrants are exempt. Alternatively, a State may exempt only certain populations from SNAP E&T participation, such as individuals experiencing homelessness.	516,189  <i>1. All Work Registrants</i>

A) Anticipated number of work registrants in the State during the Federal FY. This is an unduplicated count. Take into consideration the expected number of work registrants in the State on October 1st as well as the number of new work registrants expected throughout the Federal Fiscal Year.	516,189
C) Total estimated number of work registrants exempt from mandatory E&T (sum of State exemptions in B above).	516,189
D) Percent of all work registrants exempt from E&T (line C /line A * 100).	100%
E) Anticipated number of ABAWDs in the State during the FY.	340,068
F) Anticipated number of ABAWDs in waived areas of the State.	340,068
G) Anticipated number of ABAWDs to be exempted under the State's ABAWD discretionary exemption allowance.	0
H) Number of potential at-risk ABAWDs expected in the State during the FY (line E - (lines F +G)).	0

4. THE CATEGORIES AND TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO EXEMPT FROM E&T PARTICIPATION, THE ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF WORK REGISTRANTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO EXEMPT, AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO REEVALUATE THE VALIDITY OF ITS EXEMPTIONS;

Pennsylvania will continue to offer a voluntary SNAP E&T program in Federal FY 2022. Individuals who choose to participate in the program may do so through any of the allowable components.

5. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO PLACE IN E&T;

#### **Mandatory, Voluntary, and ADAWD Projected Participation**

	0
B) How many total voluntary participants do you expect to serve in E&T during the FY?	4,962
C) How many ABAWDs do you expect to serve in	0

	0
E&T during the FY?	

6. THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS THE STATE AGENCY EXPECTS TO PLACE IN E&T;

Pennsylvania offers a choice of eight components so that E&T participants may pursue an appropriate activity applicable to their local labor market conditions through one of three SNAP E&T contractor groups: 1) SNAP KEYS, 2) SNAP EARN, or 3) SNAP 50/50. While not all counties have SNAP KEYS or SNAP 50/50 contractors, each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties is served by at least one SNAP EARN program.

The eight SNAP E&T components offered in Pennsylvania are:

1. Supervised Job Search
2. Job Search Training
3. Job Retention
4. E&T Workfare
5. Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Programs)
6. Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training
7. English Language Acquisition
8. Work Experience

7. THE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS COVERED AND NOT COVERED BY THE E&T PLAN AND WHY, AND THE TYPE AND LOCATION OF SERVICES TO BE OFFERED;

The IMCW in the local CAO determines work registrant status at application, renewal, provider determination, and as other changes become known to DHS. IMCWs encourage SNAP recipients to volunteer to participate in the SNAP E&T program at certification and renewal without regard to their work registrant or ABAWD status.

Work registrant status is entered into eCIS by an IMCW using a series of two-digit numerical identifiers called ETP codes. These ETP codes correspond to each federal exemption from general work registration requirements.

Income Maintenance Caseworkers input ETP codes during eligibility determination which indicate work registrant or exempt status. To count work registrants for the FNS-583, DHS uses those codes in the Data Warehouse to identify all SNAP recipients who meet a federal exemption from work requirements, then subtracts the number of such recipients from the total number of all SNAP recipients to arrive at who is a work registrant as of October 1<sup>st</sup>.

8. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO COUNT ALL WORK REGISTRANTS AS OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW FISCAL YEAR;

See response to item (7) above

9. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO REPORT WORK REGISTRANT INFORMATION ON THE QUARTERLY FORM FNS-583;

Each SNAP recipient is identified in eCIS with a unique “individual number”. The SQL code used to identify work registrants utilizes the “distinct” function to ensure that each individual number is counted only once in the reported number of work registrants.

10. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO PREVENT WORK REGISTRANTS FROM BEING COUNTED TWICE WITHIN A FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR. IF THE STATE AGENCY UNIVERSALLY WORK REGISTERS ALL SNAP APPLICANTS, THIS METHOD MUST SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE EXEMPT FROM WORK REGISTRATION UNDER 7 C.F.R.

§273.7(B)(1). IF THE STATE AGENCY WORK REGISTERS NONEXEMPT PARTICIPANTS WHENEVER A NEW APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED, THIS METHOD MUST ALSO SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE PARTICIPANTS WHO MAY HAVE ALREADY BEEN REGISTERED WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS AS SPECIFIED UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(A)(1)(I);

On the state level, the Bureau of Employment Programs (BEP), in the Office of Income Maintenance (OIM), is responsible for administering the RESET (TANF E&T) and SNAP E&T programs which includes program oversight, policy guidance, and technical assistance to local CAO and contracted program staff.

On the local level, each CAO has IMCWs that enroll voluntary or ABAWD participants in SNAP E&T. A basic intake assessment is conducted by the IMCW to determine which SNAP E&T contractor is most appropriate. An EDP is created to identify participant needs and goals as they move toward obtaining employment. As those needs change, and at a minimum of every 12 months, the plan is updated. The EDP is supplemented by a more comprehensive assessment – sometimes called a service plan or IEP – which is completed by the SNAP E&T contractor.

Delivery of E&T services is available through contracted program providers, supplemented by referrals to resources available in local communities at no cost. CWDS includes digital interfaces for E&T contractors, participants, and employers and acts as the system of record. SNAP E&T requires contractors use CWDS to track participation in all components, as well as case management. CWDS’s participant-facing interface, known as Job Gateway, includes built-in resume development and job search tools, and is one method DHS uses to deliver supervised job search and job search training components to participants.

Each CAO has a E&T Ombudsman who the contracted programs in that county may reach out to at any time for technical assistance with local issues. In addition, CAOs have regular Direct Service Team meetings with each E&T contracted program and Local Management Committee meetings with a panel of several area E&T contracted programs and supportive service providers.

Additionally, eCIS, the eligibility management information system, is linked to CWDS via an overnight batch process, allowing the CAOs and contracted providers to share updates concerning participants. In addition, at least one staff person at each CAO is authorized to directly access CWDS to review cases and case notes entered by contracted programs.

CAO staff directly refer eligible SNAP applicants to E&T program staff through eCIS, which is transmitted to CWDS via an overnight batch process.

Further, E&T program staff are encouraged to submit reverse referrals. When submitting a reverse referral, E&T program staff enter relevant information into CWDS to perform a preliminary screening. CWDS interfaces with eCIS to determine if the individual is receiving SNAP and returns a response. E&T program staff must then follow up with the CAO to definitively establish the individual's eligibility for a referral. If the CAO determines that an individual is eligible for a reverse referral, the CAO sends an electronic referral through eCIS which is transmitted to CWDS via an overnight batch process. Participants are only considered enrolled in E&T if an electronic referral is sent by the CAO and accepted by the E&T program. Participants who are preliminary screened, but who are never electronically referred by the CAO, are not considered enrolled in E&T.

11. THE ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITS RESPONSIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION AND THE UNITS OPERATING THE E&T COMPONENTS, INCLUDING UNITS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. FNS IS SPECIFICALLY CONCERNED THAT THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BE EFFICIENT AND THAT NONCOMPLIANCE BY THE PARTICIPANT BE REPORTED TO THE CERTIFICATION UNIT WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS AFTER THE NONCOMPLIANCE OCCURS;

DHS partners with a wide variety of local and regional organizations in communities across the state, including: third party training providers through SNAP 50/50, community colleges through SNAP KEYS, and Local Workforce Development boards through SNAP EARN. Contracted programs provide unique perspectives and enjoy strong relationships with a broad array of community employers to ensure placement of graduates in in-demand jobs in the local job market.

12. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AGENCY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IT PLANS TO COORDINATE WITH FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES, INCLUDING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. COPIES OF CONTRACTS MUST BE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION; THE STATE AGENCY MUST DOCUMENT HOW IT CONSULTED WITH THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD. IF THE STATE AGENCY CONSULTED WITH PRIVATE EMPLOYERS OR EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS IN LIEU OF THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, IT MUST DOCUMENT THIS CONSULTATION AND EXPLAIN THE DETERMINATION THAT DOING SO WAS MORE EFFECTIVE OR EFFICIENT. THE STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE IN ITS E&T STATE PLAN A DESCRIPTION OF ANY OUTCOMES FROM THE CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS OR EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS. THE STATE AGENCY MUST ALSO ADDRESS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN THE EXTENT TO WHICH E&T ACTIVITIES WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN COORDINATION WITH THE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I OF WIOA;

DHS collaborates with third party entities who offer PA Department of Labor and Industry-approved Registered Pre-Apprenticeship programs in the fields of machining and construction. DHS collaborates with the 14 Pennsylvania community colleges, 14 state universities, and numerous career or technical schools certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the SNAP KEYS program established by state legislation (Act 92 of 2015).

Department of Labor and Industry (L&I): DHS regularly engages its sister agency, L&I, to provide information and updates regarding DHS E&T programs. These conversations have included specific details on Pennsylvania's SNAP E&T program design, including efforts to expand 50/50 partnerships so that trainings in in-demand fields are offered at even more



locations throughout the commonwealth, access to data through an MOU for purposes of enhancing service delivery, and compiling the Annual SNAP E&T Reporting Measures.

**State Workforce Development Board:** The Acting Secretary of DHS, Meg Snead, is a member of the PA Workforce Development Board. During a quarterly meeting of the board, the previous Secretary of DHS, Teresa Miller, presented information regarding the SNAP state plan's E&T activities; this was provided in writing for the board members' briefing books, as well. Board members were invited to share input, questions, and concerns on the SNAP E&T activities described.

**Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center:** Governor Tom Wolf created this Command Center, which meets weekly and is led by the Secretaries of Labor & Industry, the Department of Community and Economic Development, and the Department of State, in addition to the President of the PA Chamber of Commerce and the President of the AFL-CIO. DHS also participates on the Command Center and provided a presentation on SNAP E&T programming. DHS's goal and method of implementing SNAP 50/50 has been discussed multiple times at the Command Center.

**The PA Chamber of Commerce:** DHS invited the President of the PA Chamber of Commerce to visit a SNAP 50/50 program to further understand the model and advance discussions around training programs to meet employer needs, as well as employer investments in these programs.

**Interagency Workforce Collaboration Meetings:** DHS holds monthly interagency meetings focused on workforce development. Plans for SNAP E&T programming, particularly around the 50/50 model, have been discussed in these meetings with the L&I Deputy Secretary of Workforce Development and multiple bureau directors and staff.

**L&I Bureau of Workforce Development Administration and Center for Workforce Information and Analysis:** DHS collaborated with L&I regarding the state's goals and developing access to data through an MOU for purposes of enhancing service delivery and compiling the Annual SNAP E&T Reporting Measures.

DHS coordinates with L&I and local workforce development boards through American Job Centers. This relationship ensures that dual eligible SNAP/WIOA clients can receive access to high quality services under both programs while avoiding duplication. SNAP EARN contractors work with local workforce development boards to refer SNAP participants to appropriate Title I services and reverse refer SNAP-eligible Title I recipients into SNAP E&T. The SNAP EARN contractor is then able to track hours and supports across both programs, and report these accurately to the SNAP certification office to ensure compliance with ABAWD work requirements when necessary.

Since approval by FNS in 2006, Pennsylvania continues to operate a Mini-Simplified SNAP Program (mini-SNAP) for households that receive SNAP and TANF (Title IV-A) benefits concurrently. DHS understands that no federal SNAP E&T funds may be used to serve SNAP recipients who also receive Title IV-A assistance.

Pennsylvania plans to implement policy changes and system enhancements to allow recipients of TANF “non-assistance”, such as Diversion, to receive SNAP E&T services, while continuing to ensure that SNAP E&T funds will not be used to serve individuals who are receiving Title IV-A assistance.

As part of mini-SNAP, joint TANF/SNAP households are subject to the TANF work requirement and are served by DHS’s TANF E&T program, RESET. The RESET program and the SNAP E&T program are integrated on the state and local levels. On the state level, the Bureau of Employment Programs within the Office of Income Maintenance is responsible for administering both the RESET and the SNAP E&T programs, which includes program oversight, policy guidance, and technical assistance to local CAO and to contracted program staff. On the local level, each CAO has IMCWs that enroll participants in both RESET and SNAP E&T.

As the administrator of both the RESET and SNAP E&T programs, DHS ensures that all participants in RESET who lose eligibility for TANF assistance, and thus the ability to participate in RESET, are given the opportunity to enroll in SNAP E&T programs if appropriate.

One of our SNAP 50/50 contracted programs, the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), works exclusively with returning citizens. CEO serves three of Pennsylvania’s largest cities — Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia — and has an MOU with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC). CEO participants are dual clients of both DHS and DOC.

13. THE AVAILABILITY, IF APPROPRIATE, OF E&T PROGRAMS FOR INDIANS LIVING ON RESERVATIONS AFTER THE STATE AGENCY HAS CONSULTED IN GOOD FAITH WITH APPROPRIATE TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS;

N/A

14. IF A CONCILIATION PROCESS IS PLANNED, THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL FAILS TO COMPLY WITH AN E&T PROGRAM REQUIREMENT. INCLUDE THE LENGTH OF THE CONCILIATION PERIOD; AND

N/A

15. THE PAYMENT RATES FOR CHILD CARE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROVISIONS OF 45 CFR 98.43, AND BASED ON LOCAL MARKET RATE SURVEYS.

DHS works closely with the Office of Childhood Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), the CCDBG state agency in Pennsylvania which is housed jointly under DHS and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. SNAP E&T participants with a need for childcare are referred to OCDEL’s local Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) offices. At the ELRC, the participant is directly connected with a childcare provider approved by the ELRC; the childcare provider is directly paid by the ELRC based on the established payment rates that ELRC uses for both CCDBG and SNAP E&T clients.

16. THE COMBINED (FEDERAL/STATE) STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND OTHER EXPENSES REASONABLY NECESSARY AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO PARTICIPATION INCURRED BY E&T PARTICIPANTS. IF THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO PROVIDE DIFFERENT REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS TO ACCOUNT FOR VARYING LEVELS OF EXPENSES, FOR INSTANCE FOR GREATER OR LESSER COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STATE, IT MUST INCLUDE THEM HERE.

PA DHS issues participant reimbursements for the actual cost of transportation or other expenses, however these reimbursements are limited to the annual and lifetime caps noted in the table below.

17. INFORMATION ABOUT EXPENSES THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO REIMBURSE. FNS MUST BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED REIMBURSEMENTS BEFORE THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED.

<b>Allowable Participant Reimbursements</b>	<b>Participant Reimbursement Caps (optional)</b>	<b>Who provides the participant reimbursement?</b>	<b>Method of disbursement</b>
Transportation (may include public transportation, mileage, car repair, taxi, carpool)	\$1,500 per participant per year combined expenses in entire category (SPAL)  Mileage limited to 20¢ per mile	DHS directly (SPAL), Traveler's Aid/SEPTA, or via select contracted programs	Actual amount, in advance via EBT card or restricted endorsement check; direct issuance of needed item or service through third-party vendors
Clothing	\$150 per participant per year (SPAL)	DHS directly (SPAL) or via select contracted programs	Actual amount in advance via EBT card; direct issuance of needed item or service through third-party vendors
Dependent Care	Established rate for dependent care costs unless SNAP regulations are revised to increase the federal ceiling or match.	DHS directly via referral to the local ELRC	DHS directly pays the provider the actual cost of care (up to the cap) in the calendar month following the month services are provided.
Other work, education, and training-related expenses (may include tools, equipment, books, supplies, and certain fees)	\$1,000 lifetime limit per participant combined expenses in entire category (SPAL)	DHS directly (SPAL) or via select contracted programs	Actual amount in advance via EBT card; direct issuance of needed item or service through third-party vendors

18. FOR EACH COMPONENT THAT IS EXPECTED TO INCLUDE 100 OR MORE PARTICIPANTS, REPORTING MEASURES THAT THE STATE WILL COLLECT AND INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL REPORT IN PARAGRAPH (C)(17) OF THIS SECTION. SUCH MEASURES MAY INCLUDE:

A. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHO RECEIVED E&T SERVICES AND ARE IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT SUBSEQUENT TO THE RECEIPT OF THOSE SERVICES;

Each component for a.18.A through A.18.E. is included in the table below.

Component	Outcome Measure	Methodology including timeframes being reported (e.g. denominator and numerator)
<b>Supervised Job Search (SJS)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who were employed or during or upon completion of the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Job Search Training (JST)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who were employed or during or upon completion of the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the activity during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Job Retention (JR)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon 90-day completion	Numerator will include those participants who were employed at the 90-day completion of the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022

Component	Outcome Measure	Methodology including timeframes being reported (e.g. denominator and numerator)
		Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022
<b>E&amp;T Workfare (W)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants gaining skills likely to lead to employment	<p>Numerator will include those participants who are enrolled in the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>E&amp;T Workfare (W)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained employment after or were employed when the component completed during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>

Component	Outcome Measure	Methodology including timeframes being reported (e.g. denominator and numerator)
		9/30/2022
<b>Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Program (EPB))</b>	Number and Percentage of participants gaining skills likely to lead to employment	<p>Numerator will include those participants who are enrolled in the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Program (EPB))</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained employment after or were employed when the component completed during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Program (EPB))</b>	Number and Percentage of participants who earned a High School Equivalency Degree	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained a High School Equivalency Degree during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period</p>

Component	Outcome Measure	Methodology including timeframes being reported (e.g. denominator and numerator)
		of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/22
<b>Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Program (EPB))</b>	Number and Percentage of participants who successfully complete as determined by the provider	<p>Numerator will include those participants who successfully completed the component as determined by the provider during the period between 10/1/2021 and 9/30/22</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants gaining skills likely to lead to employment	<p>Numerator will include those participants who are enrolled in the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained employment after or were employed when the component completed during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the</p>

Component	Outcome Measure	Methodology including timeframes being reported (e.g. denominator and numerator)
		component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022
<b>Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants who earned a Credential	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained a Credential during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/22</p>
<b>English Language Acquisition (EPEL)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants gaining skills likely to lead to employment	<p>Numerator will include those participants who are enrolled in the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>English Language Acquisition (EPEL)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained employment after or were employed when the component completed during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the</p>



Component	Outcome Measure	Methodology including timeframes being reported (e.g. denominator and numerator)
		component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022
<b>Work Experience (WE)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants gaining skills likely to lead to employment	<p>Numerator will include those participants who are enrolled in the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>
<b>Work Experience (WE)</b>	Number and Percentage of participants employed during or upon completion	<p>Numerator will include those participants who obtained employment after or were employed when the component completed during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p> <p>Denominator will include those participants who are currently participating in the component and those who have completed the component during the period of 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022</p>

B. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO OBTAIN A RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, OR A REGULAR SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR ITS RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT), WHILE PARTICIPATING IN, OR WITHIN 1 YEAR AFTER RECEIVING E&T SERVICES;

The required information is included in the response to a.18.A.

C. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE IN AN EDUCATION OR TRAINING PROGRAM THAT IS INTENDED TO LEAD TO A RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AN ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAM, A REGULAR SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR ITS RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT), OR UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT;

The required information is included in the response to a.18.A.

D. MEASURES DEVELOPED TO ASSESS THE SKILLS ACQUISITION OF E&T PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS THAT REFLECT THE GOALS OF THE SPECIFIC COMPONENTS INCLUDING THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE MEETING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OR ARE GAINING SKILLS LIKELY TO LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

The required information is included in the response to a.18.A.

E. OTHER INDICATORS APPROVED BY FNS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN.

The required information is included in the response to a.18.A.

B. ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD) [28]

1. ITS PLEDGE TO OFFER A QUALIFYING ACTIVITY TO ALL AT-RISK ABAWD APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS;

N/A

2. ESTIMATED COSTS OF FULFILLING ITS PLEDGE;

N/A

3. A DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MEET PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS;

N/A

4. A DISCUSSION OF ITS CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO SERVE AT-RISK ABAWDS;

N/A

5. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIZE AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF ITS ABAWD POPULATION; AND

N/A

6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKFARE COMPONENTS IT WILL OFFER TO MEET THE ABAWD WORK REQUIREMENT

N/A

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

Has the state incorporated TAA into the sections indicated above?

Yes

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG;

Veterans and eligible persons receive employment, training, and job placement services at PA CareerLink® offices as do all other PA CareerLink® customers. Veterans and eligible persons receive veteran priority of service: they receive priority over non-veterans and other eligible

persons when receiving employment, training, and job placement services for which they are eligible.

Customers will be prompted to self-identify their veteran status upon entering the PA CareerLink® office during check-in and will subsequently receive an initial assessment. Staff members conducting assessments and determining if veterans or other eligible persons qualify to see the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) cannot be a JVSG-funded staff member. The DVOP assists veterans with significant barriers as currently specified in Veterans' Program Letters 03-14, 03-14/Change 1, 03-14/Change 2, 03-19, and any SBEs subsequently identified by Department of Labor. If the veteran lacks a significant barrier to employment and does not otherwise qualify to see the DVOP, then the veteran will be referred to the first non-grant funded staff member available for assistance.

DVOP staff will perform the following duties to provide employment, training, and job placement services to veterans and eligible persons:

- Provide targeted eligible veterans with comprehensive assessment of education, skills, and abilities.
- Identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
- Provide group and individual career coaching.
- Train veterans in communication, interviewing, professional conduct, and personal maintenance skills.
- Develop an Individual Employment Plan for veterans receiving individualized career services to identify employment goals, objectives, and appropriate services.
- Enroll and assist veterans in enrolling in PA CareerLink® online.
- Contact veterans by phone, email, or mail to discuss programs and services, job matches, and/or to refer them to postings for which they are qualified.
- Review open/active files of current veteran customers and contact those with significant barriers or in Priority status.
- Provide outreach to eligible veterans as cited in current Veterans' Program Letters and other guidance at onsite and off-site locations as indicated operationally.
- Provide customized labor market information to veteran customers.
- Document all services provided to veterans in the system of record (Commonwealth Workforce Development System) and other applications.
- Provide data and information for federal Quarterly Manager's Report by established deadline.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with local organizations that serve veterans (e.g., hospitals) for referrals.
- Establish and maintain professional, productive relationships with staff in local and neighboring PA CareerLink® and Board offices to ensure co-enrollment in WIOA Title I training services when applicable and appropriate.

Local Veterans' Employment Representative staff (LVERs) will perform the job placement and related following duties to promote and advocate for the hiring of all veterans and eligible persons to employers:

- Actively participate on local PA CareerLink® and regional business service and other teams to promote veteran hiring.
- Conduct employer outreach to explain the benefits of hiring veterans.
- Inform federal contractors of their responsibility to recruit/train qualified veterans.
- Coordinate with business organizations, unions, and apprenticeship programs to promote employment and training programs for veterans.
- Provide customized labor market information to business customers.
- Initiate and collaborate in efforts to hold career fairs; represent PA CareerLink® offices at job and career fairs.
- Document all services provided to veterans in the system of record (Commonwealth Workforce Development System) and other applications.
- Provide data and information for federal Quarterly Manager's Report by established deadline.
- Develop service delivery strategies, for initiatives and programs for veterans, with partners and providers.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with staff in local and neighboring PA CareerLink® and Board offices.

B. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE;

The DVOP assists veterans with significant barriers as currently specified in Veterans' Program Letters 03-14, 03-14/Change 1, 03-14/Change 2, 03-19, and any SBEs subsequently identified by Department of Labor.

DVOPs provide Individualized Career Services to veterans with SBE's, eligible spouses and other priority groups designated by the Secretary of the Department of Labor. DVOPs evaluate veterans and eligible persons they assist for needs, knowledge, skills, and abilities; provide career guidance through vocational guidance or referrals to counseling; aid veterans in developing and documenting an individualized employment plan (IEP); and review and update the IEP during the active case management process. They coordinate supportive services with applicable providers; deliver technical assistance to community-based organizations for employment and training services; and assist PA CareerLink® partners in providing services to these veterans and eligible persons on a priority basis. **Additionally, two DVOPs have been identified to serve as Intensive Service Coordinators acting as the point of contact for Chapter 31 VR&E veterans to coordinate employment services in accordance with relevant federal guidance.**

LVERs promote the benefits of employing veterans to employers; work with employers; plan and participate in job/career fairs; and facilitate employer training. LVERs are fully integrated

into the PA CareerLink® workforce development system and are active members of the business services team; they work with other partners and workforce development providers to communicate employer outreach and job openings.

LVERs work with employers to ascertain the jobs that employers need to fill and share this information with the PA CareerLink® center. Other PA CareerLink® staff members, in turn, make veterans aware of employment opportunities. LVERs play an important role in educating all PA CareerLink® partner staff with current employment initiatives and programs for veterans.

#### C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;

Delivery of employment, training, and job placement services for veterans and eligible persons occurs in the commonwealth's American Job Centers; in Pennsylvania, these are branded as PA CareerLink® offices. As employees of the commonwealth's Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO), which provides all WIOA Title III services and some WIOA Title I services in PA CareerLink® offices, DVOP and LVER staff have been integral and integrated members of the service delivery system in Pennsylvania since prior to implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. As bureau employees, they must complete the same training courses required (such as those on workforce development, case management, interviewing skills, customer service, workplace violence prevention) of other bureau staff who work in PA CareerLink® offices. As PA CareerLink® staff, DVOPs and LVERs are expected to attend all office staff meetings, training sessions, and workshops that keep all partners apprised of program updates, changes, revisions, accomplishments, and recommendations. As BWPO staff within the PA CareerLink® office, DVOPs and LVERs are expected to attend all meetings, trainings, and workshops called by their BWPO supervisor as well.

DVOPs work with other PA CareerLink® staff on a common strategy for identifying veterans in their offices during the initial assessment. DVOPs serve on jobseeker service teams, along with their BWPO and the Titles I, II, and IV coworkers, to ensure information-sharing about resources, services, and referrals. Regulatory limitations prevent DVOPs from providing services directly to any non-veterans or veterans without mandated SBEs. DVOPs still assist other PA CareerLink staff serving as subject matter experts on issues facing veterans and the resources available to veterans in their local area.

Alongside their peers at PA CareerLink®, DVOPs are responsible for implementing and maintaining services related to programs required by WIOA, specifically Wagner-Peyser and other legislation as needed by veterans with significant barriers to employment. It is critical that DVOPs establish and maintain professional relationships with local organizations and partner staff that serve veterans for referrals, to ensure each veteran receives all services they require.

LVERs serve on business services teams, along with their BWPO and Titles I and IV coworkers, to promote job-ready veterans to employers; ensure information-sharing with employers about the benefits of hiring veterans; explain FJCL and other requirements to employers and partners-coworkers; and provide information on current job openings.

LVERs initiate and collaborate with PA CareerLink® partners to hold career fairs; and represent PA CareerLink® offices as job and career fairs. They provide promotional and informational services to employers, employer associations, business groups, and PA CareerLink® staff

concerning the benefits of hiring veterans and eligible persons. LVERs advocate for veterans' employment and training opportunities with business, industry, labor organizations, educational institutions, and community-based organizations through contact with Veterans' community, governmental organizations and service providers.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION  
SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

Pennsylvania will not be using incentive funds at this time. In previous years the relevant labor union did not agree with the use of incentive funds for staff. At this time the Executive Board has not approved the use of incentive funds. For that reason, the commonwealth cannot make use of these funds.

E. THE POPULATIONS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING ANY ADDITIONAL  
POPULATIONS DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY AS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES, AND ANY  
ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY  
FOR SERVICES FROM ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS (E.G., NATIVE AMERICAN  
VETERANS; VETERANS IN REMOTE RURAL COUNTIES OR PARISHES);

In addition to normal priority of service the state also provides Individualized Career Services under the Jobs for Veteran State Grant (JVSG) to eligible veterans, veterans spouses, and caregivers as identified in VPL 03-14, VPL 03-14 Change 1, VPL 03-14 Change 2, and VPL 03-19. These populations include the following:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as defined at 38 USC 4211 (1) and (3); Special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
  - who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or,
  - were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- A homeless veteran, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a));
- A recently separated service member, as defined at 38 USC 4211 (6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;
- An offender, as defined in the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 3(38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;
- A veteran who lacks a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- A low-income veteran, as defined in WIOA Section 3(36)(A)
- A Veteran aged 18-24
- A Vietnam-era Veteran as identified by 38 U.S.C. 4211
- An Eligible Transitioning Service Member, Spouse, or Caregiver as described in VPL 07-14
  - Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of intensive services (now referred to as Individualized Career Services);
  - Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities (MTF) or warrior transition units (WTU); and

- The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured members

“Eligible spouse” as defined at section 2(a) of the JVA (38 U.S.C. 4215[a]) means the spouse of any of the following:

1. Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
2. Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:
  - a. Missing in action;
  - b. Captured in line of duty by a hostile force; or
  - c. Forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power;
3. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
4. Any veteran who died while a disability was in existence. A spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member (i.e., categories b. or c. above) would lose his or her eligibility if the veteran or service member were to lose the status that is the basis for the eligibility (e.g. if a veteran with a total service-connected disability were to receive a revised disability rating at a lower level). Similarly, for a spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member, that eligibility would be lost upon divorce from the veteran or service member.

#### F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

The description of how the state implements and monitors priority of service to covered persons is included in the Common Elements of the WIOA State Plan.

#### G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF:

##### 1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

##### 2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

##### 3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

#### H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

#### I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

Per Title 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(f) performance indicators are negotiated with the Department of Labor for the JVSG program that are consistent with state performance accountability measures

applicable under section 116(b) of WIOA. These measures establish a two-year performance target for JVSG on a PY basis. The current negotiated performance measures are:

### **Jobs for Veterans Grant funded services from ETA-9173 for JVSG**

Employment Rate in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after participants program exit:	57%
Employment Rate in the 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter after participants program exit:	57%
Median Earnings – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after the participants program exit:	\$5,900

These measures will be renegotiated for PY 2023.

## **SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)**

### **A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT**

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

1. *Discuss long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d))(May alternatively be discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan.)*

Using the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data, the first table below identifies the statewide industry long-term employment projections for occupations with the highest percentage of workers age 55 and older. Using the Census Bureau's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis used the staffing patterns to determine which occupations were most likely to be found in those industries with the highest percentage of older workers. The second table identifies the statewide occupational long-term employment projections for the top employing occupations in the industries with the highest percentage of workers ages 55 and older. Using these tables, NAICS code 4854, School and Employee Bus Transportation is an industry that employs a high percentage of older workers and is projected to grow between 2018 and 2028. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code 53-3022 Bus Drivers: School or Special Client is an occupation in the School and Employee Bus Transportation industry that is projected to have 4,216 annual openings, and older workers are a good fit for these jobs.

### **Statewide Employment Projections for the Top 25 Industries with the Highest Percentage of Workers Aged 55+**

NAICS Code	Industry Title	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Volume Empl. Change (2016-26)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)
4855	Charter Bus Industry	2,110	2,130	20	0.9%
4854	School and Employee Bus Transportation	24,900	26,550	1,650	6.6%



NAICS Code	Industry Title	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Volume Empl. Change (2016-26)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)
8122	Death Care Services	7,230	7,320	90	1.2%
8131	Religious Organizations	73,230	71,380	-1,850	-2.5%
3131	Fiber, Yarn, and Thread Mills	390	390	0	0.0%
4853	Taxi and Limousine Service	1,950	1,610	-340	-17.4%
4531	Florists	3,120	2,540	-580	-18.6%
3159	Apparel Accessories and Other Apparel Manufacturing	480	510	30	6.3%
4911	Postal Service	27,880	24,320	-3,560	-12.8%
4871	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Land	470	530	60	12.8%
4851	Urban Transit Systems	270	210	-60	-22.2%
4859	Other Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	4,530	5,670	1,140	25.2%
3346	Manufacturing and Reproducing Magnetic and Optical Media	240	150	-90	-37.5%
3152	Cut and Sew Apparel Manufacturing	3,410	2,290	-1,120	-32.8%
6112	Junior Colleges	16,920	17,040	120	0.7%
4831	Deep Sea, Coastal, and Great Lakes Water Transportation	230	190	-40	-17.4%
3333	Commercial and Service Industry Machinery Manufacturing	2,510	2,200	-310	-12.4%
4245	Farm Product Raw Material Merchant Wholesalers	700	740	40	5.7%
8139	Business, Professional, Labor,	17,600	17,230	-370	-2.1%

NAICS Code	Industry Title	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Volume Empl. Change (2016-26)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)
	Political, and Similar Organizations				
2213	Water, Sewage and Other Systems	2,560	2,740	180	7.0%
4231	Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Parts and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	15,290	14,970	-320	-2.1%
3221	Pulp, Paper, and Paperboard Mills	2,920	2,680	-240	-8.2%
3132	Fabric Mills	2,510	2,420	-90	-3.6%
4811	Scheduled Air Transportation	12,060	12,630	570	4.7%
3344	Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing	9,800	9,170	-630	-6.4%
4855	Charter Bus Industry	2,110	2,130	20	0.9%

Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2018-2028)

**Statewide Employment Projections for the Top-Employing Occupations in the Industries with the Highest Percentage of Workers 55-plus**

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	ST OJT	30,160	32,680	8.4%	4,216	\$21,840	\$32,490
21-2011	Clergy	BD	13,590	13,880	2.1%	1,517	\$27,850	\$53,470
43-5052	Postal Service Mail Carriers	ST OJT	14,230	12,580	-11.6%	830	\$38,720	\$52,850
43-6014	Secretaries	ST OJT	100,060	90,740	-9.3%	9,746	\$25,980	\$38,940
21-	Directors, Religious	BD+	9,650	9,690	0.4%	1,201	\$22,480	\$43,990

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
2021	Activities & Education							
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	ST OJT	167,470	161,630	-3.5%	19,111	\$24,420	\$38,360
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners	ST OJT	96,770	102,460	5.9%	13,688	\$21,190	\$30,440
43-5053	Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors & Processing Machine Oprs	ST OJT	5,010	4,210	-16.0%	302	\$37,140	\$52,050
13-1075	Labor Relations Specialists	BD+	4,660	4,330	-7.1%	419	\$47,160	\$82,540
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	PS+	60,730	58,130	-4.3%	6,664	\$28,440	\$42,220
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	ST OJT	152,080	165,200	8.6%	23,346	\$24,570	\$33,910
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	ST OJT	38,250	40,690	6.4%	4,731	\$22,000	\$38,330
43-5051	Postal Service Clerks	ST OJT	3,620	3,200	-11.6%	217	\$39,200	\$51,260
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	MT OJT	63,220	67,240	6.4%	6,725	\$28,080	\$43,500
53-3041	Taxi Drivers & Chauffeurs	ST OJT	13,580	15,870	16.9%	1,825	\$21,840	\$32,490
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	BD+	82,580	88,220	6.8%	7,980	\$59,350	\$131,060
21-2099	Religious Workers, Other	BD	3,730	3,740	0.3%	482	\$17,490	\$29,990
27-2042	Musicians & Singers	LT OJT	5,940	5,800	-2.4%	684	N/A	N/A
25-2011	Preschool Teachers	AD	16,970	18,050	6.4%	1,866	\$21,970	\$31,850

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
43-1011	Supervisors - Office & Administrative Support Workers	WK EXP	70,360	69,400	-1.4%	7,225	\$40,460	\$63,070
27-2041	Music Directors & Composers	BD+	2,680	2,620	-2.2%	309	\$23,570	\$49,730
39-9011	Childcare Workers	ST OJT	46,690	48,100	3.0%	7,211	\$18,240	\$24,070
39-4021	Funeral Attendants	ST OJT	2,470	2,560	3.6%	412	\$19,770	\$33,410
25-3021	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	WK EXP	14,500	15,590	7.5%	1,824	\$20,840	\$36,920
37-3011	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	ST OJT	40,440	43,230	6.9%	5,697	\$23,790	\$32,440
51-2028	Electrical & Electronic Equipment Assemblers	MT OJT	14,060	14,430	2.6%	1,656	\$26,400	\$37,540
53-3021	Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity	MT OJT	4,980	5,170	3.8%	659	\$27,850	\$41,880
43-4181	Reservation & Transportation Ticket Agents & Travel Clerks	ST OJT	3,130	3,250	3.8%	375	\$27,020	\$44,770
41-4012	Sales Representatives	MT OJT	62,190	64,380	3.5%	6,857	\$38,190	\$75,360
51-6031	Sewing Machine Operators	ST OJT	4,440	3,990	-10.1%	427	\$20,700	\$28,200
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	ST OJT	125,710	122,300	-2.7%	16,186	\$25,640	\$38,760
49-3031	Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	LT OJT	13,700	14,480	5.7%	1,381	\$36,840	\$50,930
43-	Receptionists & Information	ST OJT	40,520	42,550	5.0%	5,784	\$21,890	\$30,960

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
4171	Clerks							
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	PS	46,840	50,130	7.0%	5,439	\$20,500	\$27,920
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	BD	9,170	9,800	6.9%	1,047	\$36,800	\$64,090
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	BD	57,540	61,020	6.0%	5,871	\$50,090	\$77,810
41-2022	Parts Salespersons	MT OJT	8,900	9,180	3.1%	1,116	\$22,920	\$34,010
27-1023	Floral Designers	MT OJT	2,060	1,810	-12.1%	168	\$21,100	\$28,870
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	ST OJT	169,250	165,660	-2.1%	24,101	\$19,560	\$29,580
39-4031	Morticians, Undertakers & Funeral Directors	AD+	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$29,460	\$50,120
43-6011	Executive Secretaries & Executive Administrative Assistants	WK EXP	19,270	15,640	-18.8%	1,591	\$43,960	\$63,160
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics & Service Technicians	PS	2,990	3,050	2.0%	254	\$49,570	\$72,270
37-2012	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	ST OJT	51,210	52,140	1.8%	7,051	\$20,320	\$26,800
51-9196	Paper Goods Machine Operators	MT OJT	6,030	5,890	-2.3%	633	\$32,270	\$43,570
51-1011	Supervisors - Production & Operating Workers	WK EXP	28,520	29,050	1.9%	2,995	\$42,290	\$64,400
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians &	PS	35,900	36,510	1.7%	3,586	\$28,070	\$43,160

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
	Mechanics							
25-1011	Business Teachers, Postsecondary	PhD	5,520	6,380	15.6%	578	\$49,110	\$108,320
25-1194	Vocational Education Teachers, Postsecondary	BD+	4,940	5,070	2.6%	426	\$38,200	\$61,070
51-8031	Water & Wastewater Treatment Plant & System Operators	LT OJT	5,380	5,090	-5.4%	446	\$40,290	\$54,970
17-3023	Electrical & Electronic Engineering Technicians	AD	4,840	4,990	3.1%	494	\$38,880	\$59,610
33-9032	Security Guards	ST OJT	44,620	46,230	3.6%	6,007	\$22,440	\$31,490
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, Other	BD	18,370	19,210	4.6%	1,887	\$52,680	\$86,160
53-1048	Supervisors - Transportation & Vehicle Operators	WK EXP	20,090	21,610	7.6%	2,378	\$37,980	\$59,050
43-5081	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	ST OJT	85,950	87,500	1.8%	11,699	\$21,290	\$29,140
25-1123	English Language & Literature Teachers, Postsecondary	PhD	3,840	4,070	6.0%	351	\$49,220	\$76,850
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers & Weighers	MT OJT	22,690	19,250	-15.2%	2,239	\$29,290	\$43,450
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers	BD+	53,040	56,820	7.1%	4,430	\$49,660	\$69,410
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving &	ST OJT	25,550	25,780	0.9%	2,570	\$26,550	\$37,930

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
	Traffic Clerks							
11-9131	Postmasters & Mail Superintendents	WK EXP	760	610	-19.7%	35	\$68,990	\$80,070
43-5061	Production, Planning & Expediting Clerks	MT OJT	11,370	11,970	5.3%	1,276	\$34,340	\$49,190
49-1011	Supervisors - Mechanics, Installers & Repairers	WK EXP	20,110	21,060	4.7%	1,983	\$50,550	\$74,090
43-5032	Dispatchers	MT OJT	7,540	7,650	1.5%	730	\$29,000	\$43,240
39-9032	Recreation Workers	ST OJT	15,720	16,800	6.9%	2,809	\$19,170	\$28,510
25-1071	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	PhD	7,540	9,230	22.4%	863	\$46,050	\$111,720
13-1161	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	BD	26,820	30,090	12.2%	3,237	\$39,960	\$70,320
25-1121	Art, Drama & Music Teachers, Postsecondary	MD	5,130	5,530	7.8%	479	\$42,740	\$81,600
51-2098	Team Assemblers	MT OJT	46,570	41,100	-11.7%	4,558	\$24,620	\$35,730
25-1072	Nursing Instructors & Teachers, Postsecondary	PhD	4,010	4,890	21.9%	455	\$52,460	\$78,360
25-3097	Teachers & Instructors, Other, Except Substitutes	BD	8,120	8,850	9.0%	1,040	\$21,400	\$45,980
25-1022	Mathematical Science Teachers, Postsecondary	PhD	2,460	2,600	5.7%	224	\$50,080	\$91,030

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
41-3099	Sales Representatives, Other Services	MT OJT	36,220	38,970	7.6%	5,035	\$35,700	\$73,830
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers	AD+	1,000	1,040	4.0%	82	\$57,170	\$88,440
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	PS	27,120	29,610	9.2%	2,574	\$36,790	\$55,600
13-1121	Meeting, Convention & Event Planners	BD	4,520	4,820	6.6%	563	\$33,320	\$52,820
51-6063	Textile Knitting & Weaving Machine Operators	ST OJT	770	740	-3.9%	81	\$27,680	\$35,040
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles & Equipment	ST OJT	14,160	14,950	5.6%	2,198	\$20,210	\$27,980

Source: Long-Term Occupational Projections (2018-28) and Occupational Wages (2020)

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

The only other industry that has more annual demand is Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers (23,346 annual demand) but this is a high physical impact employment that SCSEP participants cannot be safely trained in. SCSEP participants are mostly trained in modern office, clerical, and customer service skills in the NPOs in their training assignments. They are trained in modern computer software and clerical techniques. Some participants that show an interest and drive to succeed in maintenance/janitorial employment can also be trained in host agencies and have been very successful in finding unsubsidized employment through SCSEP training.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

The second table for response (1) above shows the highest annual demands of participants 55 years and older as a Retail Sales Person (24,101 annual demand), Office Clerks, General (19,111 annual demand), and Customer Service Representatives (15,154 annual demand). The customer service and office clerks require clerical skills, such as filing, computer skills, good written and verbal communication, and an ability to conduct yourself in a professional manner. Jobs in retail sales and customer service require a minimal amount of skills and often provide on the job training. They do require an employee that works independently and is dependable. As is



outlined in the table below, these specific jobs provide short-term on the job training and require little training after high school.

**Statewide Employment Projections for the Short- or Moderate-Term On-the-Job Training (OJT) Occupations with a Total Annual Demand of 1,000 or More**

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	ST OJT	151,530	174,050	14.9%	31,240	\$17,920	\$22,800
41-2011	Cashiers	ST OJT	145,340	139,100	-4.3%	26,204	\$18,200	\$23,070
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	ST OJT	169,250	165,660	-2.1%	24,101	\$19,560	\$29,580
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	ST OJT	152,080	165,200	8.6%	23,346	\$24,570	\$33,910
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	ST OJT	119,450	150,620	26.1%	21,939	\$22,130	\$26,510
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	ST OJT	98,520	102,860	4.4%	19,760	\$17,880	\$26,270
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	ST OJT	167,470	161,630	-3.5%	19,111	\$24,420	\$38,360
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	ST OJT	125,710	122,300	-2.7%	16,186	\$25,640	\$38,760
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners	ST OJT	96,770	102,460	5.9%	13,688	\$21,190	\$30,440
43-5081	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	ST OJT	85,950	87,500	1.8%	11,699	\$21,290	\$29,140
43-6014	Secretaries	ST OJT	100,060	90,740	-9.3%	9,746	\$25,980	\$38,940
31-1011	Home Health Aides	ST OJT	46,450	59,840	28.8%	7,295	\$22,130	\$26,510
39-9011	Childcare Workers	ST OJT	46,690	48,100	3.0%	7,211	\$18,240	\$24,070
37-2012	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	ST OJT	51,210	52,140	1.8%	7,051	\$20,320	\$26,800

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
47-2061	Construction Laborers	ST OJT	55,340	59,970	8.4%	6,876	\$29,870	\$45,000
41-4012	Sales Representatives	MT OJT	62,190	64,380	3.5%	6,857	\$38,190	\$75,360
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	MT OJT	63,220	67,240	6.4%	6,725	\$28,080	\$43,500
35-3011	Bartenders	ST OJT	33,110	34,270	3.5%	6,042	\$17,860	\$25,930
33-9032	Security Guards	ST OJT	44,620	46,230	3.6%	6,007	\$22,440	\$31,490
43-4171	Receptionists & Information Clerks	ST OJT	40,520	42,550	5.0%	5,784	\$21,890	\$30,960
37-3011	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	ST OJT	40,440	43,230	6.9%	5,697	\$23,790	\$32,440
41-3099	Sales Representatives, Other Services	MT OJT	36,220	38,970	7.6%	5,035	\$35,700	\$73,830
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	ST OJT	38,250	40,690	6.4%	4,731	\$22,000	\$38,330
51-2098	Team Assemblers	MT OJT	46,570	41,100	-11.7%	4,558	\$24,620	\$35,730
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	ST OJT	30,160	32,680	8.4%	4,216	\$21,840	\$32,490
35-9031	Hosts & Hostesses: Restaurant, Lounge & Coffee Shop	ST OJT	16,180	17,610	8.8%	4,012	\$17,760	\$21,810
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	ST OJT	20,840	22,370	7.3%	3,889	\$18,160	\$24,410
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	ST OJT	31,480	33,430	6.2%	3,846	\$31,260	\$39,640

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
53-7064	Packers & Packagers, Hand	ST OJT	26,460	26,420	-0.2%	3,805	\$21,550	\$28,770
35-9021	Dishwashers	ST OJT	22,570	23,100	2.3%	3,678	\$18,320	\$23,230
45-2092	Farmworkers & Laborers, Crop, Nursery & Greenhouse	ST OJT	21,890	22,060	0.8%	3,604	\$20,160	\$32,550
35-9011	Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers	ST OJT	15,710	17,060	8.6%	2,934	\$17,800	\$21,960
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	MT OJT	21,180	24,270	14.6%	2,853	\$28,460	\$37,800
39-9032	Recreation Workers	ST OJT	15,720	16,800	6.9%	2,809	\$19,170	\$28,510
43-3021	Billing & Posting Clerks	MT OJT	22,900	24,960	9.0%	2,803	\$30,630	\$40,960
47-2073	Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equipment Oprs	MT OJT	22,300	23,730	6.4%	2,796	\$38,680	\$56,240
39-9031	Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors	ST OJT	14,420	15,920	10.4%	2,670	\$20,460	\$38,590
21-1093	Social & Human Service Assistants	ST OJT	19,750	21,670	9.7%	2,654	\$25,960	\$35,550
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks	ST OJT	25,550	25,780	0.9%	2,570	\$26,550	\$37,930
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	ST OJT	15,940	17,070	7.1%	2,546	\$24,170	\$33,630
51-9111	Packaging & Filling Machine Operators	MT OJT	20,660	21,480	4.0%	2,529	\$25,440	\$36,780
39-	Amusement & Recreation	ST OJT	10,200	11,030	8.1%	2,528	\$17,720	\$21,820

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
3091	Attendants							
35-2012	Cooks, Institution & Cafeteria	ST OJT	16,310	17,450	7.0%	2,502	\$22,460	\$30,580
35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession & Coffee Shop	ST OJT	10,820	11,350	4.9%	2,458	\$17,920	\$22,800
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers & Weighers	MT OJT	22,690	19,250	-15.2%	2,239	\$29,290	\$43,450
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles & Equipment	ST OJT	14,160	14,950	5.6%	2,198	\$20,210	\$27,980
33-3051	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	MT OJT	28,680	29,760	3.8%	2,158	\$45,010	\$70,970
43-3071	Tellers	ST OJT	20,260	17,580	-13.2%	2,011	\$26,560	\$32,030
35-3041	Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	ST OJT	11,520	12,630	9.6%	1,998	\$19,840	\$24,620
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	MT OJT	16,720	17,630	5.4%	1,973	\$33,810	\$46,870
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	ST OJT	17,170	16,710	-2.7%	1,879	\$17,910	\$31,340
53-3041	Taxi Drivers & Chauffeurs	ST OJT	13,580	15,870	16.9%	1,825	\$21,840	\$32,490
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	MT OJT	16,600	17,990	8.4%	1,820	\$29,640	\$66,430
39-2021	Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	ST OJT	9,470	10,720	13.2%	1,761	\$19,010	\$27,960
51-2028	Electrical & Electronic Equipment Assemblers	MT OJT	14,060	14,430	2.6%	1,656	\$26,400	\$37,540
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	MT OJT	18,150	19,350	6.6%	1,632	\$24,130	\$31,760

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
41-2021	Counter & Rental Clerks	ST OJT	11,720	12,270	4.7%	1,594	\$20,410	\$31,630
33-9092	Lifeguards, Ski Patrol & Other Recreational Protective Service	ST OJT	6,150	6,530	6.2%	1,569	\$17,770	\$21,850
43-4081	Hotel, Motel & Resort Desk Clerks	ST OJT	8,830	8,470	-4.1%	1,429	\$19,020	\$24,510
33-3012	Correctional Officers & Jailers	MT OJT	17,550	16,360	-6.8%	1,376	\$42,780	\$57,220
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents	MT OJT	13,410	14,070	4.9%	1,371	\$34,590	\$57,420
39-3031	Ushers, Lobby Attendants & Ticket Takers	ST OJT	5,400	5,530	2.4%	1,342	\$17,950	\$23,710
47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	MT OJT	11,400	11,850	3.9%	1,335	\$31,200	\$44,000
45-2093	Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch & Aquacultural Animals	ST OJT	8,120	7,900	-2.7%	1,285	\$19,640	\$29,020
43-4111	Interviewers	ST OJT	9,990	10,280	2.9%	1,276	\$25,440	\$37,850
43-5061	Production, Planning & Expediting Clerks	MT OJT	11,370	11,970	5.3%	1,276	\$34,340	\$49,190
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators	MT OJT	11,440	11,890	3.9%	1,242	\$32,160	\$44,220
33-9091	Crossing Guards	ST OJT	6,970	7,390	6.0%	1,217	\$19,810	\$32,130
39-9041	Residential Advisors	ST OJT	7,280	7,890	8.4%	1,213	\$23,710	\$32,420
51-3092	Food Batchmakers	MT OJT	7,620	7,800	2.4%	1,161	\$24,310	\$37,430

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2016)	Proj. Empl. (2026)	Percent Empl. Change (2016-26)	Total Annual Demand	Entry-Level Wage (2018)	Average Wage (2018)
43-9041	Insurance Claims & Policy Processing Clerks	MT OJT	11,010	11,170	1.5%	1,119	\$33,020	\$48,750
41-2022	Parts Salespersons	MT OJT	8,900	9,180	3.1%	1,116	\$22,920	\$34,010
51-6011	Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Workers	ST OJT	7,800	8,090	3.7%	1,089	\$19,970	\$25,820
47-2141	Painters, Construction & Maintenance	MT OJT	9,860	10,460	6.1%	1,088	\$31,720	\$48,300
43-3011	Bill & Account Collectors	MT OJT	9,760	9,120	-6.6%	1,062	\$29,280	\$40,230

Source: Long-Term Occupational Projections (2018-28) and Occupational Wages (2020)

## B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN, BUT REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT IN DOCUMENT, MUST INCLUDE:

A. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

There are varying degrees of involvement by the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors with the PA CareerLink® one-stop system. The AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors are involved with the PA CareerLink® centers in the following ways: Refer all individuals ages 55 and older to the PA CareerLink® centers to enroll in CWDS; refer SCSEP eligible individuals ages 55 and older to the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors for services; co-locate SCSEP staff at the PA CareerLink® centers on a full- or part-time basis; and co-locate SCSEP participants at the PA CareerLink® centers to serve as greeters, resource room aides, job developers, custodians, clerical aides, and customer service representatives. The PDA SCSEP program manager will also provide yearly training on the WIOA title I programs as cross training. The goal will be to provide SCSEP sub-grantees the necessary tools to provide useful referrals to local PA CareerLink® staff.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(H))

Since the Department of Aging also administers the other titles of the Older Americans Act (OAA), it is in a position to coordinate the activities of the OAA with SCSEP. The Department of Aging will make the national SCSEP sponsors aware of these activities through e-mail announcements. The PDA SCSEP program manager, who is in direct contact with the OAA services unit director, attends bi-monthly meeting with the OAA services team. During these meetings, updates are provided by the various OAA services department team members and updates of these changes will be shared with all local SCSEP subgrantees. The PDA SCSEP

program manager is also the single point of contact for all SCSEP sub-grantees with Area Agency on Aging throughout the state, and can assist all sub-grantees with answering questions and assisting with concerns about OAA programs.

**C. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH- BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))**

The PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources (The Link) is a focal point for Pennsylvania residents seeking information and referrals for services to the elderly and adults with disabilities. The PA Link, through its collaborative network of partners including state and local, public and private agencies, improves access to information and linkages to long term living supports and services. Private and public entities and programs providing services to older individuals such as assisted living, nursing home, vocational rehabilitation, and transportation and providers serving persons with disabilities are just a few of the agencies that comprise the Link. Many SCSEP providers are members of the Link which will serve them well in learning about the myriad of local services available that can help SCSEP participants in general.

**D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))**

Each month, the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA) provides the Department of Aging with Job Posting files by Local Workforce Development Area. The Department of Aging sends this information to its SCSEP sub-grantees and National Sponsors. Senior staff from the CWIA have presented at annual SCSEP trainings in the past few years. The trainings consisted of an explanation of the many available labor market information products and how SCSEP coordinators can use these products to find SCSEP participants' jobs.

**E. ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)**

There are varying degrees of involvement by the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors with the PA CareerLink® one-stop system. The AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors are involved with the PA CareerLink® centers in the following ways: Refer all individuals ages 55 and older to the PA CareerLink® centers to enroll in CWDS; PA CareerLink® staff refer SCSEP eligible individuals ages 55 and older to the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors for services; co-locate SCSEP staff at the PA CareerLink® centers on a full- or part-time basis; and co-locate SCSEP participants at the PA CareerLink® centers to serve as greeters, resource room aides, job developers, custodians, clerical aides, and customer service representatives.

**F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.**

In most rural job development areas, SCSEP program offices bring job development activities to the participants and applicants. Job developers attend local job fairs and employment activities at local agencies. They will also meet applicants and participant at local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and senior centers in their area to provide information on the SCSEP and enroll potential participants. In a very rural three-county area in the Southwest corner of the commonwealth, the Southwest PA AAA maintains relationships with key individuals at local organizations involved in economic development, such as the Mon Valley Progress Council, the Middle Monongahela Development Association, and the Washington and Fayette County Chambers of Commerce, as well as the Washington Business District Authority, and the Washington County Foundation. The AAA has requested these organizations' participation in area job fairs and also to present during participant meetings on employment opportunities.

**2. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)**

SCSEP sub-grantees are provided with occupations in the commonwealth that require Short-Term On-the-Job Training (ST OJT) or Moderate-Term On-the-Job Training (MT OJT). Of the occupations that require ST OJT or MT OJT, many are classified as High Priority Occupations (HPO). HPO's are occupations that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs and are most likely to provide family sustaining wages. SCSEP staff focus on companies that have HPOs that are appropriate for SCSEP participants. As partners in the local PA CareerLink® centers, SCSEP staff have access to employers. SCSEP staff also work with human resource managers to discuss their staffing needs and how SCSEP participants could potentially meet these needs. The Department of Aging, through the Pennsylvania Hall of Fame of Champions of Older Workers, annually honors one employer in the commonwealth that recognizes and values the 381 | Page talents of the commonwealth's older workers. The Department of Aging and representatives from a few National SCSEP sponsors select the winner. Nomination forms are sent to all local WDB directors, PA CareerLink® administrators, AAAs, National SCSEP sponsors, and General Assembly members. The winner is honored annually in May during the PA Partners Conference Employer Recognition Luncheon. During this annual employer awards luncheon, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services also honor employers.

**3. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))**

According to the SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals PY 2019, Volume II, August 3, 2021 the minority population in the commonwealth was 25.7 percent. Based on the Minority Report, 50.1 percent of the individuals served in the SCSEP were minorities, which is almost double the statewide percentage. The commonwealth's previous strategies in serving minorities will continue because minorities are being served at a much higher level than their proportionate share. SCSEP providers shall continue to make extensive outreach efforts to potential minority SCSEP participants and communities, specifically to community groups, senior centers, cultural/social groups, fraternal organizations, chambers of commerce, libraries, community based media, community leaders and retail stores. Current partnerships with minority organizations will be renewed. Outreach to minority populations will continue to include paid advertisements and coordination with organizations that serve minority groups.

**4. A LIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES THAT ARE NEEDED AND THE PLACES WHERE THESE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED. SPECIFICALLY, THE PLAN MUST ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND LOCATION OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS MOST IN NEED OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE GROUPS WORKING TO MEET THEIR NEEDS. (20 CFR 641.330)**

The task of identifying the types of community services that are needed and the places where these services are most needed is best left at the local level where there is a better understanding of each community's unique needs. As the commonwealth is a diverse state, each community has its own unique needs and the individuals comprising those communities that are most in need have varying degrees of factors that precipitate their individual situations.

**5. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))**



In the past decade, the Department of Aging went from 52 SCSEP sub-grantees to its current 8. The Department of Aging will be issuing a Request for Grant Applications for SCSEP services in at least 42 of the 52 AAA Planning and Service Areas (PSAs) in December 2022. Selected providers will begin to provide SCSEP services in the four designated AAA PSA Regions on July 1, 2023.

6. THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCSEP PARTICIPANTS' ENTRY INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT, AND TO ACHIEVE, AT A MINIMUM, THE LEVELS SPECIFIED IN OAA SECTION 513(A)(2)(E)(II). (20 CFR 641.302(F))

All SCSEP grantees in the commonwealth will be invited to attend future SCSEP trainings conducted by the Department of Aging. The annual training addresses best practices to assist grantees to improve their performance in meeting the common measure performance goals of Employment rate-2nd quarter after exit, Employment rate-4th quarter after exit, and median earnings as well as the other goals of community service, most in need and service level.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

Projects are authorized in each county of the commonwealth. The number of SCSEP positions or slots that each county receives is based on a formula that takes into account the number of individuals ages 55 and older who are at or below 125 percent of the poverty level. Local decisions based on many factors determine which host agencies provide training to the participants. Some of these factors are: the host agency's ability to hire; does the host agency offer good training or provide a particularly important community service; does the host agency assist with the job search process through their contacts with other agencies and local businesses; and does the host agency provide a supportive environment for participants with multiple and/or significant barriers that can also offer short-term opportunities for participants prior to IEP development. Federal regulatory priorities of service govern what populations are served. Priority of Service is provided first to Veterans and qualified spouses with further preference to those persons 65 and older or individuals with: a disability; limited proficiency; low literacy skills; reside in a rural area; low employment prospects; failed to find employment through WIOA Title I services; homeless or at risk of homelessness; Formerly incarcerated.

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE CONDUCTED. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

The following lists the counties where the SCSEP project will take place in PY 2021 to include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and any change from PY 2019 to PY 2020: Adams 2; Armstrong 15; Berks 9; Bradford 12 (+8); Bucks 13; Butler 26 (+1); Cambria 6; Carbon 2; Chester 7(+1); Clarion 3; Columbia 12 (+9); Cumberland 23 (+16); Dauphin 5; Delaware 12 (+1); Erie 12; Fayette 7 (+2); Franklin 6 (+1); Greene 1; Indiana 5; Jefferson 3; Lackawanna 6; Lancaster 15; Lebanon 3; Lehigh 9 (+1); Luzerne 12 (-1); Lycoming 5; Monroe 10 (+1); Montgomery 20 (-2); Montour 3 (+1); Northampton 5; Philadelphia 99 (+5); Pike 6; Potter 3; Schuylkill 5; Somerset 16 (-1); Susquehanna 2;; Venango 12 (+2); Washington 6; Wayne 3; Westmoreland 13; Wyoming 2 ; York 7 (+1). In January 2021 50 SCSEP slots were swapped between the national SCSEP grantee Associates for Training and Development (A4TD) and The Department in order to better serve SCSEP participants. In all, The Department gained participant slots in four counties (Bradford, Columbia, Cumberland, and Montour) and stopped operating in 11 counties (Blair, Bradford, Centre, Clearfield, Huntington, Juniata, Mifflin, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, Tioga, and Union). In concentrating our efforts in specific

counties, and partnering with A4TD, we are developing more robust programs throughout the state that will be able to serve the community equally.

### 3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

Pennsylvania has counties over-served with a +5-slot variance and 9 counties under-served with a -5-slot variance. Counties such as Monroe, and Lehigh are over-served because there are larger eligible applicant pools, more viable job opportunities and higher placement outcomes for the population that we serve. They were also able to find more suitable training with the COVID restrictions. Counties such as Philadelphia, Cumberland, and Montgomery are under-served due to the COVID-19 restrictions and an unwillingness of people to enroll in SCSEP with the fear of infection. The effects of COVID-19 host agency and recruitment restrictions has also led to the problem of under enrollment throughout the state. Pennsylvania unemployment rate is currently at 8.1%, mostly due to COVID-19 restrictions Pennsylvania continues to add jobs, but they are not in the fields that SCSEP participants are well suited. According to data collected by PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, construction, mining and logging, and education and health services are the fastest growing industries in Pennsylvania.

The AARP Foundation has 2 counties over-served with a +5-slot variance and 6 counties under-served with a -5-slot variance. ATD has 2 counties over-served with a +5-slot variance and 8 counties under-served with a -5-slot variance. NCOA has 6 counties over-served with a +5-slot variance and 12 counties under-served with a -5-slot variance. NUL has 2 counties that is under-served with a -5 slot variance. TWP has three counties that are under-served with a over a -5 slot variance. Most of these variances' over-lap with the state programs. Lack of an eligible applicant pool, transportation related issues, lack of viable job opportunities, and COVID-19 safety restrictions are the major reasons why the underserved counties are under-served, and over-served counties are overserved due to high population density and availability of eligible applicants and availability of host agencies that can accommodate on-site training and the lingering effects of COVID-19 restrictions and limits of applicants.

### 4. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

#### A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.

All over enrolled areas have been instructed to start reducing participants through attrition and under enrolled areas have been instructed to increase outreach were we are able to conduct outreach safely. On the state level, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging will continue to spread information of SCSEP at the state Workforce Development Board and the local workforce development boards whenever appropriate. PA Department of Aging will continue to provide technical assistance to all of our Pennsylvania project locations regarding the importance of achieving equitable distribution. In areas that are under served by more than 5 like Philadelphia and Montgomery participants are underserved by the state grantee and the national grantee. This is also true for some of the over-served regions like Cambria. Philadelphia is just now opening up due to COVID-19 and should be able to fill all of its 25 open positions by the end of the first quarter of 2021. These counties are over served in both the state and national grantees. In Monroe Co, the state program has been instructed to forward any referrals to the National grantee as NCOA is under served in this county. In Lehigh, the AARP Foundation is overserved as a State sub-grantee but underserved as a National grantee. They are in the process of opening more participants on the National grant. NCOA overserved in most of the same counties the state programs are also overserved.

#### B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

The statewide distribution of eligible individuals who reside in rural and urban areas is 20 percent and 80 percent respectively. This data was obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey. Based on the final FY 20-21 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 26 percent of the participants served resided in rural area and 74 percent resided in urban areas. In order to maintain this level of service, the program will continue to maintain current levels by reaching out to the eligible senior population at community centers, like local libraries and senior centers. We will also continue to reach out to non-profit agencies to give a wide range of training options to participants to help alleviate travel concerns.

**C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)**

Please refer to the SCSEP priorities of service above. SCSEP providers use a variety of recruitment methods to reach out to individuals who must be afforded priority of service. Some of these methods are as follows: mailing postcards to zip codes that have a significant number of most in need individuals as defined by the SCSEP; networking with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Administration, Adult Education Programs, and PA CareerLink® centers; working with agencies that specialize in immigrant and minority services; and hiring SCSEP staff who are bilingual.

**5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))**

**Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined**

Geography	Total Population for whom Poverty is Determined	Total Population 55 and Over	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Number)	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Percent)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Number)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Percent)
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>12,380,284</b>	<b>3,990,528</b>	<b>494,108</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>3,496,420</b>	<b>87.6%</b>
Adams County	98,301	34,657	2,790	8.1%	31,867	91.9%
Allegheny County	1,189,220	395,049	48,347	12.2%	346,702	87.8%
Armstrong County	65,167	24,629	3,646	14.8%	20,983	85.2%
Beaver County	163,216	60,496	6,846	11.3%	53,650	88.7%
Bedford County	47,728	18,077	2,829	15.6%	15,248	84.4%
Berks County	404,844	124,543	13,694	11.0%	110,849	89.0%
Blair County	120,340	41,728	5,846	14.0%	35,882	86.0%
Bradford County	60,147	21,644	2,901	13.4%	18,743	86.6%
Bucks County	618,415	208,878	14,729	7.1%	194,149	92.9%
Butler County	181,455	61,729	6,178	10.0%	55,551	90.0%
Cambria County	126,423	48,748	7,393	15.2%	41,355	84.8%
Cameron County	4,572	2,022	313	15.5%	1,709	84.5%

Geography	Total Population for whom Poverty is Determined	Total Population 55 and Over	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Number)	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Percent)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Number)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Percent)
Carbon County	62,558	22,885	2,876	12.6%	20,009	87.4%
Centre County	143,344	39,453	3,174	8.0%	36,279	92.0%
Chester County	506,870	152,593	10,746	7.0%	141,847	93.0%
Clarion County	37,537	12,757	1,935	15.2%	10,822	84.8%
Clearfield County	74,047	26,907	4,062	15.1%	22,845	84.9%
Clinton County	37,185	12,027	1,601	13.3%	10,426	86.7%
Columbia County	61,000	21,223	3,104	14.6%	18,119	85.4%
Crawford County	81,944	29,564	4,157	14.1%	25,407	85.9%
Cumberland County	235,647	76,321	5,528	7.2%	70,793	92.8%
Dauphin County	271,057	82,782	9,538	11.5%	73,244	88.5%
Delaware County	543,919	165,422	17,100	10.3%	148,322	89.7%
Elk County	29,922	11,321	1,257	11.1%	10,064	88.9%
Erie County	260,956	83,996	11,392	13.6%	72,604	86.4%
Fayette County	126,862	46,290	8,057	17.4%	38,233	82.6%
Forest County	3,613	2,230	414	18.6%	1,816	81.4%
Franklin County	151,885	49,679	4,865	9.8%	44,814	90.2%
Fulton County	14,409	5,209	661	12.7%	4,548	87.3%
Greene County	33,320	11,654	1,773	15.2%	9,881	84.8%
Huntingdon County	39,825	14,937	2,048	13.7%	12,889	86.3%
Indiana County	79,196	27,561	3,678	13.3%	23,883	86.7%
Jefferson County	42,983	15,354	2,184	14.2%	13,170	85.8%
Juniata County	24,326	8,192	1,083	13.2%	7,109	86.8%
Lackawanna County	202,694	68,869	9,660	14.0%	59,209	86.0%
Lancaster County	528,680	160,968	15,165	9.4%	145,803	90.6%
Lawrence County	84,605	31,602	4,821	15.3%	26,781	84.7%
Lebanon County	136,039	44,226	4,812	10.9%	39,414	89.1%

Geography	Total Population for whom Poverty is Determined	Total Population 55 and Over	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Number)	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Percent)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Number)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Percent)
Lehigh County	355,304	104,774	11,831	11.3%	92,943	88.7%
Luzerne County	305,739	103,343	14,057	13.6%	89,286	86.4%
Lycoming County	107,874	36,962	4,404	11.9%	32,558	88.1%
McKean County	38,319	13,529	1,771	13.1%	11,758	86.9%
Mercer County	104,066	39,050	4,157	10.6%	34,893	89.4%
Mifflin County	45,537	15,830	1,896	12.0%	13,934	88.0%
Monroe County	165,579	54,222	6,524	12.0%	47,698	88.0%
Montgomery County	802,207	251,000	17,003	6.8%	233,997	93.2%
Montour County	17,546	6,217	796	12.8%	5,421	87.2%
Northampton County	291,401	97,675	8,975	9.2%	88,700	90.8%
Northumberland County	87,589	31,748	4,400	13.9%	27,348	86.1%
Perry County	45,442	15,020	1,669	11.1%	13,351	88.9%
Philadelphia County	1,535,277	387,103	99,311	25.7%	287,792	74.3%
Pike County	54,989	21,400	1,972	9.2%	19,428	90.8%
Potter County	16,554	6,485	1,107	17.1%	5,378	82.9%
Schuylkill County	135,206	47,473	6,744	14.2%	40,729	85.8%
Snyder County	38,125	12,711	1,393	11.0%	11,318	89.0%
Somerset County	69,090	26,597	3,676	13.8%	22,921	86.2%
Sullivan County	5,925	2,737	388	14.2%	2,349	85.8%
Susquehanna County	40,454	16,230	2,006	12.4%	14,224	87.6%
Tioga County	40,362	14,775	2,310	15.6%	12,465	84.4%
Union County	36,023	12,506	1,344	10.7%	11,162	89.3%
Venango County	50,605	19,848	2,738	13.8%	17,110	86.2%
Warren County	39,012	15,068	1,847	12.3%	13,221	87.7%
Washington	202,068	72,647	7,949	10.9%	64,698	89.1%

Geography	Total Population for whom Poverty is Determined	Total Population 55 and Over	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Number)	Under 125 Percent of Poverty Level (Percent)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Number)	At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level (Percent)
County						
Wayne County	47,703	19,662	2,532	12.9%	17,130	87.1%
Westmoreland County	345,567	133,291	15,211	11.4%	118,080	88.6%
Wyoming County	26,519	9,750	1,114	11.4%	8,636	88.6%
York County	435,951	136,653	13,780	10.1%	122,873	89.9%

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate (2020)

#### 6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

##### A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

The statewide distribution of eligible individuals who reside in rural and urban areas is 20 percent and 80 percent respectively. This data was obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey. Based on the final FY 20-21 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 26 percent of the participants served resided in rural area and 74 percent resided in urban areas.

##### B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2020 American Community Survey, there were 494,108 individuals in the commonwealth who were age 55 and older and whose incomes were below 125 percent of the poverty level. Based on the final FY 19-20 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 90 percent of the participants served were below the poverty level. The percent of individuals served by the Department of Aging and nine national SCSEP operators in the commonwealth in FY 19-20 who were below the poverty level (90 percent) exceeded the statewide percentage of eligible individuals that are below the poverty level (12 percent).

##### C. ARE MINORITIES

According to the SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals PY 2019, Volume II, August 3, 2021 the minority population in the commonwealth was 25.7 percent. Based on the final FY 19-20 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 60 percent of the individuals served were minorities, which is more than double the statewide percentage.

##### D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2020 American Community Survey, 4.2 percent of the SCSEP eligible population in the commonwealth did not speak English well. Based on the final FY 20-21 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 4 percent of the individuals served had limited English proficiency. The percent of individuals served by the Department of Aging and nine national SCSEP operators in FY 20-21 who had limited English proficiency (4 percent) is equal to the statewide percentage of eligible individuals who did not speak English very well (4.2 percent).

#### E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

One of the Department of Aging's and the nine national SCSEP sponsors six performance goals is serving the most in need. This goal measures the average number of barriers per SCSEP participant. The barriers are: severe disability; frail; age 75 or older; old enough for but not receiving Social Security Title II; severely limited employment prospects and living in an area of persistent unemployment; limited English proficiency; low literacy skills; disability; rural; veterans; low employment prospects; failed to find employment after using WIOA Title I services; homeless; at risk of homelessness; and formerly incarcerated. The total number of barriers divided by the number of participants served provides the average number of barriers per participant. Based on the final FY 19-20 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors all exceed their most in need targets.

#### F. FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS, AS DEFINED IN TEGL 17-20

According to the most current available data from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 1 in 28 individuals in Pennsylvania are either incarcerated or under some form of parole/probation supervision. This accounts for 3.6% of Pennsylvania's total population. Approximately 90% of all incarcerated individuals in Pennsylvania will be release, with 81% of these individuals reporting possessing no skills and limited literacy. Currently the SCSEP program population consists of 3.7% of individuals meeting the Formerly Incarcerated priority of service criteria. SCSEP sub-grantees will continue to coordinate the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections through the local Workforce Development system to identify and enroll formerly incarcerated individuals that are in need of skills training into the SCSEP.

#### 7. A DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOME AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))

SCSEP providers in the commonwealth will ensure the least disruption possible to participants when positions are redistributed or when new Census data becomes available or for any other reason. Participants can never be terminated because of changes in funding, slots, providers or any other reason. If changes are needed, they will be implemented gradually, and no participant will be adversely affected. SCSEP grantees in the commonwealth are not permitted to transfer slots from one county to another county or from one county to another state unless there is prior approval from the Department of Aging and the USDOL.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

*(a) Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may*

The PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) is the commonwealth agency that represents the required one-stop (PA CareerLink® partner) representing employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42. U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) at the state level. DCED will continue to contribute financial assistance to be applied to the infrastructure and other operating costs of the PA CareerLink® sites annually and to the extent funding exists through the Community Services Block Grant funds.

The mission of the Community Services Block grant (CSBG) is to provide a full range of services and activities having a measurable impact on the causes of poverty in a community or those areas of a community where poverty is a particularly acute problem. Only federally designated

Community Action Agencies (CAA) receive funding, therefore in PA, there are 43 CAAs that cover all 67 PA counties. Ameliorating the causes and conditions of poverty take on a variety of community engagement activities and collaborative activism to remove obstacles that block the achievement of self-sufficiency; i.e. community stakeholder collaboration; literacy activities; employment and training resources; obtaining adequate housing; grassroots activities that provide intervention to the causes of poverty; addressing the needs of youth through programming or coordination; and increased engagement in community planning, development and improvement activities.

CSBG has been in existence since 1965, always with the same mission: to ameliorate the causes and conditions of poverty. Initiatives have included, but are not limited to: neighborhood linkages, leverage of community resources, conduction of Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites, building housing capacity, provision of family self-sufficiency and case management, early childhood intervention and Head Start; facilitation of Results-Oriented Management and Accountability. In 2017, for every dollar of CSBG funds, the PA network leveraged \$17.38 from other federal, state, local, and private sources, including the calculated value of volunteer hours.

DCED will participate in the local workforce service delivery system via the local CSBG agencies. In the initial years of the implementation of the WIOA State Plan, agreements were put into place between DCED and L&I to establish that CSBG agencies:

- Participate on local and regional planning groups;
- Engage in Business Service Teams activities;
- Have print materials available in the PA CareerLink® centers;
- Be linked to local workforce websites on computers;
- Potentially hold meetings at PA CareerLink® centers;
- Conduct joint employer outreach sessions as necessary; and
- Seek to leverage grant funding opportunities.

It is DCED's commitment that CSBG, as a required partner, will become part of the fabric of the public workforce system in a much more formalized way than in the previous years. To that end, DCED and L&I staff have actively collaborated to determine the status of the relationships between CSBG agencies and CareerLink® offices. These analyses have identified not only the historical relationships between the systems, but also the positive/innovative projects occurring and the areas that are lacking in coordination and collaboration.

*(b) Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy.*

These projects were identified as positive projects by L&I, DCED and the CSBG and CareerLink agencies and shared with both networks and will serve as best practices for the weaker areas to consider in their development:



- Center for Community Action, Tableland Services, Inc. and the Southern Alleghenies workforce Development Board have redefined their approaches to target the multiple and complex barriers for individuals seeking employment. The CSBG agencies identified single contact persons who would be available for direct contact by their CareerLink offices and therefore would use current technology like Skype or Facetime to meet jointly with clients to address barriers such as housing or child care, for example. The CSBG agency is relied on for the navigation of helping services regardless of whether they provide the direct services or not since they can serve as the coordinator with knowledge of community helping practices.

- Schuylkill Community Action, Commission on Economic Opportunity and the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Development Board maintains positive engagement regarding individuals' needs which are barriers to employment. The two community action agencies serve as the navigators and service providers or referral agents to address barriers. Staff members are identified as contact persons and board/committee members. Joint workshops are conducted as well.

- Montgomery County Community Action Development Commission and the Montgomery County Workforce Development Board take their collaboration very seriously with monthly support meetings to continuously analyze how the challenging barriers to work can be overcome. They engage in virtual workshops with individuals and want to move into the two-generation approach in working with families to address all barriers to employment. They have together created a six-week training for manufacturing jobs and continue to bring in other community leaders to collaborate. In addition, the CSBG agency Executive Director has been, for many years, an active and engaged Workforce Development Board member.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

### ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

#### ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	73.0%	73.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	71.0%	71.0%	72.0%	72.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$6,250.00	\$6,250.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%	67.0%	64.0%	68.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	40.0%	50.0%	41.0%	50.5%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

**ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - DISLOCATED PROGRAM  
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.0%	77.0%	78.0%	78.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	76.0%	77.0%	77.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,750.00	\$8,750.00
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	70.0%	68.0%	72.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.0%	44.0%	42.0%	46.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

1

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

**ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE  
INDICATORS**

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	66.0%	66.0%	67.0%	67.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	65.0%	66.0%	66.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	58.0%	58.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

#### WAGNER-PEYSER ACT - WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$6,250.00	\$6,250.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

#### ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM - ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	47.0	47.0	47.0	47.5

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	5,450	5,450	5,450	5,500
Credential Attainment Rate	37.0	37.0	37.0	37.2
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0	35.0	36.0	36.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

**VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (COMBINED OR GENERAL) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	53.0%	56.0%	55.0%	57.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	47.0%	47.0%	58.0%	48.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,900.00	\$4,900.00
Credential Attainment Rate	2.0%	20.0%	2.5%	21.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	32.0%	39.0%	36.0%	40.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.*

**ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE**

Additional Indicators of Performance
Pennsylvania has chosen not to identify any additional indicators of performance.

## OTHER APPENDICES



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

February 4, 2022

Ms. Angela Hanks  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Employment and Training Administration  
United States Department of Labor.

Ms. Jennifer Mishory  
Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions and Duties of  
Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education  
United States Department of Education

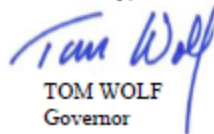
Ms. Katherine Neas  
Assistant Secretary  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services  
United States Department of Education

Via email: [WIOA.Plan@dol.gov](mailto:WIOA.Plan@dol.gov)

Dear Ms. Hanks, Ms. Mishory, and Ms. Neas:

By this letter I am designating James Martini, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, as the primary official to serve as the final submitter on behalf of all included programs for Pennsylvania's Combined State Plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Sincerely,

  
TOM WOLF  
Governor

There does not appear to be a place to include the REO program in the portal, so it appears below:

### Coordination of Services and Activities for Justice-Involved Individuals

*Describe how the State and the REO grantee(s) will coordinate services and activities for justice involved individuals to successfully attain employment and transition into their communities with Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems.*

Increased collaboration amongst the education, training, workforce development, criminal justice and community-based systems to enhance reentry employment opportunities promotes an effective and efficient government that works. The alignment of reentry planning and service activities among stakeholders can likely improve the justice-involved individual's ability to attain and retain a job that pays family-sustaining wages and to be a productive tax-paying citizen.

Approximately 1 in 28 individuals in Pennsylvania are either incarcerated or under some form of parole/probation supervision. Over 81 percent of the individuals entering the DOC self-report as unskilled or possess no skills and reading levels are slightly below 8th and 9th grades for male and female offenders, respectively. Over 90 percent of the DOC population will ultimately be released and have reintegration needs including employment. Identified as an individual with barriers to employment, ex-offenders also characteristically are basic skills deficient and depict the sub-populations of individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, individuals receiving public assistance such as SNAP, homeless, older, English language learners, single parents, long-term unemployed, and veterans.

Faith-based and community organizations, as well as Local Workforce Development Boards, local workforce service providers and criminal justice system providers that intend to apply to the REO Program solicitations can contact DOC for a letter of support or more formal agreements to support reentry program implementation. Additional information on requesting a letter of support can be found on the DOC website:

<https://www.cor.pa.gov/About%20Us/Initiatives/Pages/Grants---Letters-of-Support.aspx>. The DOC values the applicant's ability to demonstrate an understanding of the criminally-involved population and the criminal justice system as well as the evidence-based practices that support an individual's reentry success and recidivism reduction. The PA Department of Corrections (DOC) will respond to requests for information from PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I), including confirmation if we provided a letter of support.

The U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) REO Program awards are provided directly to the applicant and, in the instance a formal collaboration with the DOC has been established, DOC coordinates access to the state offender population and participates in REO programs as agreed upon.

Coordination of services and activities for justice involved individuals to attain and retain employment across the community, workforce and criminal justice systems is critical. However, since most applicants are direct recipients of the grant award, DOC does not partner with all applicants, and there is no formal mechanism established by U.S. DOL to indicate/communicate

to DOC or L&I that an REO award is made in Pennsylvania. The DOC and L&I may participate in a workgroup if initiated by an REO grantee to support activities to include:

- Outreach and communicate to REO applicants (and potential applicants) on availability of solicitations.
- Establish a process to determine formal agreements of support by L&I and DOC for applications, including prioritization for programs/activities that a) align with the WIOA priorities outlined in the State Plan, b) incorporate workforce best practices that achieve successful employment outcomes and c) incorporate criminal justice best practices that achieve successful recidivism reduction outcomes.
- Monitor U.S. DOL REO awardee information for Pennsylvania recipients.
- Provide technical assistance, where possible and appropriate, to REO recipients in areas such as: designating staff contacts to guide interaction with the workforce and criminal justice systems, establish points of access and processes across the REO program and the workforce and criminal justice systems, identify opportunities to align common intake/referral, identify opportunities to support the identification and tracking of performance for ex-offenders, and other opportunities.

The State Board has also established a Re-entry Ad Hoc Committee that will identify strategies to support ex-offenders re-entering the workforce and encourage employers to hire ex-offenders. Committee members will include State Board members, Local Board members and staff, representatives from the PA Departments of Labor & Industry and Corrections, CareerLink® staff, training providers, employers, and ex-offenders.

### Innovative Employment and Training Programs

*Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by faith based and community organizations (FBCOs), State reentry councils, and justice-organizations in coordination with education and training providers, one-stop centers and other supportive services, which improve employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals.*

The Department of Corrections (DOC) created a Workforce Development Specialist position to promote workforce development for inmates and reentrants both within DOC and to external partners. The position works with the Division of Corrections Education, reentry staff within State Correctional Institutions, the Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC), Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) Field Staff, and with outside organizations to implement meaningful learning opportunities for inmates and to establish community connections to create a continuity of support to ensure reentrants gain and sustain employment and reduce their chance of recidivism. The Specialist will collaborate with reentry partners to understand reentrants' barriers to employment; provide feedback to DOC staff on potential changes to policy that may assist reentrants. The Specialist is the single point of contact for outside employers, community colleges, training programs, and unions who wish to partner with DOC.